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THE LIVES  
OF  
THE FATHERS, MARTYRS  
AND OTHER PRINCIPAL  
SAINTS



## SAINT BRUNO

St Bruno wearing here the habit of a Carthusian monk was the founder of the Carthusian Order. His great learning was matched only by his great humility. With some of his disciples he settled in the desert of Chartreuse and there built an oratory and small cells set apart from each other where each monk lived.

THE LIVES  
OF  
THE FATHERS, MARTYRS  
AND OTHER PRINCIPAL  
SAINTS

BY THE REV. ALBAN BUTLER

EDITED FOR DAILY USE BY

THE REV. BERNARD KELLY, F.R. HIST. SOC.

VOLUME III



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JULY 26

## SAINT ANNE, MOTHER OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

[See Cuper the Bollandist, t. vi. Julij, p. 233.]

THE Hebrew word Anne signifies gracious. St Joachim and St Anne, the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, are justly honoured in the church, and their virtue is highly extolled by St John Damascen. The Emperor Justinian I built a church at Constantinople in honour of St Anne about the year 550.<sup>1</sup> Codinus mentions another built by Justinian II in 705. Her body was brought from Palestine to Constantinople in 710, whence some portions of her relics have been dispersed in the West. F. Cuper the Bollandist has collected a great number of miracles wrought through her intercession.<sup>2</sup>

God has been pleased by sensible effects to testify how much he is honoured by the devotion of the faithful to this saint, who was the great model of virtue to all engaged in the married state, and charged with the education of children. It was a sublime dignity and a great honour for this saint to give to a lost world the advocate of mercy, and to be parent of the mother of God. But it was a far greater happiness to be, under God, the greatest instrument of her virtue, and to be spiritually her mother by a holy education in perfect innocence and sanctity. St Anne, being herself a vessel of grace, not by name only, but by the possession of that rich treasure, was chosen by God to form his most beloved spouse to perfect virtue; and her pious care of this illustrious daughter was the greatest means of her own sanctification and her glory in the church of God to the end of ages. It is a lesson to all parents whose principal duty is the holy education of their children. By this they glorify their Creator, perpetuate his honour on earth to future ages, and sanctify their own souls. St Paul says that it is by the education of their children that parents are to be saved.<sup>3</sup> Nor will he allow anyone who has had children ever to be admitted to serve the altar whose sons do not, by their holy conduct, give proofs of a virtuous education. Nevertheless, we see parents solicitous about the corporeal qualifications of their children, and earnest to procure them an establishment in the world; yet supinely careless in purchasing them virtue, in which alone their true happiness consists. This reflection drew tears from Crates, a heathen philosopher, who desired to mount on the highest place in his city and cry out, with all his strength, "Citizens, what is it you think of? You employ all your time in heaping up riches to leave to your children; yet take no care to

<sup>1</sup> Procop. de Ædific. Justin. lib. i. c. 2.<sup>2</sup> Julij, t. vi. p. 250.<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 5; 1 Tim. v. 4.

cultivate their souls with virtue, as if an estate were more precious than themselves.”<sup>1</sup>

*The following feasts are celebrated on July 26 :*

ST ANNE, mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary : ST GERMANUS, Bishop of Auxerre, born about 380, titular saint of many churches in England and of the great Abbey of Selby in Yorkshire : and THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF ORANGE, in France, thirty-two nuns, killed in the French Revolution.

JULY 27

ST PANTALEON, MARTYR

(A.D. 303)

[See the Collections of F. Bosch the Bollandist, t. vi. Julij, p. 397.]

HE was physician to the Emperor Galerius Maximianus, and a Christian, but fell by a temptation which is sometimes more dangerous than the severest trials of the fiercest torments; for bad example, if not shunned, insensibly weakens and at length destroys the strongest virtue. Pantaleon being perpetually obsessed by it in an impious idolatrous court, and deceived by often hearing the false maxims of the world applauded, was unhappily seduced into an apostasy. But a zealous Christian called Hermolaus, by his prudent admonitions, awakened his conscience to a sense of his guilt and brought him again into the fold of the church. The penitent ardently wished to expiate his crime by martyrdom; and to prepare himself for the conflict, when Diocletian's bloody persecution broke out at Nicomedia in 303, he distributed all his possessions among the poor. Not long after this action he was taken up, and in his house were also apprehended Hermolaus, Hermippus, and Hermocrates. After suffering many torments they were all condemned to lose their heads. St Pantaleon suffered the day after the rest. He is ranked by the Greeks amongst the great martyrs. Procopius mentions a church in his honour at Constantinople, which being decayed was repaired by Justinian. His relics were translated to Constantinople, and there kept with great honour as St John Damascen informs us.<sup>2</sup> The greatest part of them are now shown in the abbey of St Denys, near Paris, but his head at Lyons.

Physicians honour St Pantaleon as their chief patron after St Luke. Happy are they in that profession who improve their study chiefly to glorify the supreme Creator, whose infinite power and wisdom are displayed in all his works; and who, by the opportunities of charity which their art continually offers them, rejoice to afford comfort and corporeal, if not often also spiritual succour, to the most suffering and distressed part of their species, especially among the poor. All the healing powers of medicine are a gift of God;<sup>3</sup> and he himself, who could have restored Ezechias to health by the least act of his omnipotent will, directed Isaiah to apply

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, i. de Educand. liberis.

<sup>2</sup> Or. 3, de Imag.

<sup>3</sup> Ecclus. xxxviii. 1, 2.

dry figs to the abscess into which his fever was terminating; than which poultice no better remedy could have been used to promote suppuration.<sup>1</sup> St Ambrose,<sup>2</sup> St Basil,<sup>3</sup> and St Bernard<sup>4</sup> inveigh severely against too nice and anxious a care of health as a mark of inordinate self-love and immortification; nor is anything generally more hurtful to it. But as man is not master of his own life or health, he is bound to take a moderate reasonable care not to throw them away.<sup>5</sup> To neglect the more simple and ordinary succours of medicine when absolutely necessary is to transgress that law of charity which everyone owes to himself.<sup>6</sup> The saints who condemned, as contrary to their penitential state, far sought or exquisite means, with St Charles Borromeo, were scrupulously attentive to essential prescriptions of physicians in simple and ordinary remedies. But let the Christian in sickness seek, in the first place, the health of his soul by penance and the exercise of all virtues. Let him also consider God as his chief physician, begging him, if it may be conducive to his divine honour, to restore the frame he created, and entreating our Redeemer to stretch out that hand upon him with which in his mortal state he restored so many sick to their health. He who trusts more in the art of physicians than the Lord will deserve the reproach of Asa, King of Juda.<sup>7</sup> So hidden are often the causes of distempers, so precarious the power of remedies, and so uncertain the skill of the ablest physicians, that their endeavours frequently check nature instead of seconding its efforts and thus hasten death. The divine blessing alone is the Christian's sheet-anchor, perfect resignation to the divine will is the secure repose of his soul; and the fervent exercise of penance, patience, and devotion is his gain in the time of sickness.

*The following feasts are celebrated on July 27 :*

ST CONGALL, Abbot of Iabhnal-Livin, in the upper part of Lough Erne : ST LUICAN, titular saint of Kil-luican in Ireland : THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF CUNCOLIM, 1583, five members of the Society of Jesus : ST PANTALEON, a Christian physician to the emperor, who fell into apostacy and then re-entered the fold and died a glorious martyr; this saint is, after St Luke, the patron of physicians : SAINTS MAXIMIAN, MALCHUS, MARTINIAN, DIONYSIUS, JOHN, SERAPION, and CONSTANTINE, young martyrs, commonly called "the seven sleepers"; their bodies were found in 479.

## JULY 28

### ST NAZARIUS AND ST CELSUS, MARTYRS

(ABOUT THE YEAR 68)

[From two sermons delivered on their festival, the one by St Ennodius, the other passes under the name of St Ambrose, and was written soon after his time, perhaps by St Gaudentius of Brescia; also from Paulinus the deacon, in his life of St Ambrose. See Tillemont, t. ii. and Pinius the Bollandist, t. vi. Julij, p. 503.]

ST NAZARIUS's father was a heathen and enjoyed a considerable post in the Roman army. His mother Perpetua was a zealous Christian, and was

<sup>1</sup> 4 Kings xx. 7. See Syn. Critic. and Mead, De Morbis Biblicis, c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Serm. 22, in Ps. cxviii.

<sup>3</sup> Ep. 345, ol. 321, p. 316, et in Cant.

<sup>4</sup> Ephes. v. 29; Aug. Ep. 130, ol. 121, ad Probam.

<sup>5</sup> Regul. fus. explic.

<sup>6</sup> See Estius in Eccli. xxxviii.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Paral. xv. 12.

instructed by St Peter, or his disciples, in the most perfect maxims of our holy faith. Nazarius embraced it with so much ardour that he copied in his life all the great virtues he saw in his teachers; and out of zeal for the salvation of others left Rome, his native city, and preached the faith in many places with a fervour and disinterestedness becoming a disciple of the apostles. Arriving at Milan he was there beheaded for the faith, together with Celsus, a youth whom he carried with him to assist him in his travels. These martyrs suffered soon after Nero had raised the first persecution. Their bodies were buried separately in a garden without the city, where they were discovered and taken up by St Ambrose in 395. In the tomb of St Nazarius a vial of the saint's blood was found as fresh and red as if it had been spilt that day. The faithful stained handkerchiefs with some drops and also formed a certain paste with it; a portion of which St Ambrose sent to St Gaudentius, Bishop of Brescia. St Ambrose conveyed the bodies of the two martyrs into the new church of the apostles, which he had just built. A woman was delivered of an evil spirit in their presence. St Ambrose sent some of these relics to St Paulinus of Nola, who received them with great respect, as a most valuable present, as he testifies.<sup>1</sup>

The martyrs died as the outcasts of the world, but are crowned by God with immortal honour. The glory of the world is false and transitory, and an empty bubble or shadow; but that of virtue is true, solid, and permanent, even in the eyes of men: for, to use the comparison of St Basil,<sup>2</sup> as the more we look upon the sun the more we admire it, and by reviewing it never find it less bright or less beautiful, so the memory of the martyrs which we celebrate, after so many years, is only more fresh in our minds, and will be more flourishing in all ages to come.

*The following feasts are celebrated on July 28 :*

ST INNOCENT I, Pope, 402; he ascended the Papal chair with trembling, and never ceased to beg of God the spirit of wisdom and prudence: ST NAZARIUS and ST CELSUS, about the year 68, honoured with ST VICTOR and ST INNOCENT: BLESSED MICHAEL ABBA GHEBRA, martyr: ST SAMPSON, Bishop, a child of prayer, born 496 in that part of Wales now called Glamorganshire; educated by St Iltutus: and ST VICTOR, Pope, succeeded St Eleutherius, a native of Africa and a true successor of the apostles.

JULY 29

## ST MARTHA, VIRGIN

SHE was sister to Mary and Lazarus, and lived with them at Bethania, a small town two miles distant from Jerusalem, a little beyond Mount Olivet. Our Blessed Redeemer had made his residence usually in Galilee, till in the third year of his public ministry he preached chiefly in Judea, during which

<sup>1</sup> St Paulin. Carm. 24, and Ep. 12. On the relics of St Nazarius at Milan, see the life of St Charles Borromeo, by Guissiano, in the new Latin edition, lib. v. c. 9, p. 435, and the notes of Oltrocci, *ibid*.

<sup>2</sup> St Bas. hom. de St Gordio.



interval he frequented the house of these three holy disciples. Martha seems to have been the eldest, and to have had the chief care and direction of the household. It appears from the history of the resurrection of Lazarus that their family was of principal note in the country. In the first visit, as it seems, with which Jesus honoured them,<sup>1</sup> St Luke tells us<sup>2</sup> that St Martha showed great solicitude to entertain and serve him. She forgot the privilege of her rank and riches, and would not leave so great an honour to servants only, but was herself very busy in preparing everything for so great a guest and his holy company. Mary sat all the while at our Saviour's feet, feeding her soul with his heavenly doctrine. In this she found such inexpressible sweetness, and so great spiritual advantage, that she forgot and contemned the whole world, and would suffer nothing to draw her from her entertainment with her God, or make her lose any one of those precious moments. At his sacred discourses her heart was inflamed, her pure soul seemed to melt in holy love, and in a total forgetfulness of all other things she said to herself, with the spouse in the Canticles, "My beloved to me, and I to him, who feedeth among the lilies";<sup>3</sup> that is, with chaste souls, or among the flowers of virtues. St Austin observes that this house represents to us the whole family of God on earth. In it no one is idle, but his servants have their different employments, some in the contemplative life, as recluses; others in the active; as, first, those who labour for the salvation of souls in the exterior functions of the pastoral charge; secondly, those who, upon pure motives of charity, serve the poor or the sick; and, lastly, all who look upon their lawful profession in the world as the place for which God has destined them and the employment which he has given them; and who faithfully pursue its occupations with a view purely to accomplish the divine will, and acquit themselves of every duty in the order in which God has placed them in this world. He is the greater saint, whatever his state of life may be, whose love of God and his neighbour is more pure, more ardent, and more perfect; for charity is the soul and form of Christian perfection.

But it has been disputed whether the contemplative or the active life be in itself the more perfect. St Thomas answers this question,<sup>4</sup> proving from the example of Christ and his apostles that the mixed life, which is made up of both, is the most excellent. This is the apostolic life, with the care of souls, if in it the external functions of instructing, assisting, and comforting others, which is the most noble object of charity, be supported by a constant perfect spirit of prayer and contemplation. In order to this, a long and fervent religious retirement ought to be the preparation which alone can form the perfect spirit of this state; and the same must be constantly nourished and improved by a vehement love and frequent practice

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 38.<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> Cant. ii.<sup>4</sup> 3. p. 9. 40. a. 1. ad 2 et 3. Item 2. 2dæ. q. 182. art. 1 et 2, in corp.

of holy retirement and a continued recollection, as Christ during his ministry often retired to the mountains to pray; for that pastor who suffers the spirit of prayer to languish in his soul carries about a dead soul in a living body, to use the expression of St Bonaventure.<sup>1</sup> The like interior spirit must animate; and some degree of assiduity in the like exercises, as circumstances will allow, must support those who are engaged in worldly employs and those who devote themselves to serve Christ's most tender and afflicted members, the poor and the sick, as Martha served Christ himself.

With so great love and fervour did Martha wait on our Redeemer that, as we cannot doubt, she thought that if the whole world were occupied in attending so great a guest all would be too little. She wished that all men would employ their hands, feet, and hearts, all their faculties and senses, with their whole strength, in serving with her their gracious Creator, made for us our brother. Therefore, sweetly complaining to him, she desired him to bid her sister Mary to rise up and help her. Our meek and loving Lord was well pleased with the solicitude and earnestness, full of affection and devotion, wherewith Martha waited on him; yet he commended more the quiet repose with which Mary attended only to that which is of the greatest importance, the spiritual improvement of her soul. "Martha, Martha," said he, "thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is necessary." If precipitation or too great eagerness had any share in her service, this would have been an imperfection; which, nevertheless, does not appear. Christ only puts Martha in mind that though corporeal duties ought not to be neglected, and if sanctified by a perfect intention of charity are most excellent virtues, yet spiritual functions, when they come in competition, are to be preferred. In this sense Christ so highly commends the choice of Mary, affirming that her happy employment would never be taken from her. He added, "One thing is necessary"; which words some explain as if he had said, "a little is enough, one dish suffices"; but the word "necessary" determines the sense rather to be, as St Austin, St Bernard, Maldonatus, Grotius, and others expound it, eternal salvation is our only affair.

Another instance which shows how dear this devout family was to our divine Saviour is the raising of Lazarus to life. When he fell sick the pious sisters sent to inform Christ, who was then absent in Galilee. They said no more in their message than this, "He whom thou lovest is sick." They knew very well that this was enough; and that his tender bowels would be moved to compassion by the bare representation of their calamity. It was not to remove our corporeal miseries that Christ came from heaven, and died and suffered so much; this was not the object which drew down this Almighty Physician among us. If, in his mortal life on earth, he healed the sick and raised the dead, by these miracles he

<sup>1</sup> L. de Perfect. Religios.

would manifest, as by sensible tokens, the spiritual cures which he desired to work in our souls. We groan under the weight of innumerable and the most dreadful spiritual miseries. Our tender Redeemer knows their horrible depth and endless extent; but he would have us to conceive a just sense of them, to acknowledge them, and earnestly to implore his aid: for this he sheds the rays of his light upon our blind souls and rouses us by his repeated graces. The first step towards a deliverance is that we confess, with a feeling sense, our extreme baseness and ingratitude, and our weakness and total incapacity of doing anything of ourselves towards our recovery; but we have a physician infinitely tender and powerful. To him then we must continually lay open our distress, and with deep compunction display our miseries before his holy eyes, earnestly striving by this dumb eloquence to move him to pity; exposing to him that we whom he loveth still as the work of his hands, as the price of his blood, lie engulfed in unspeakable miseries. Thus we must entreat him, with tears and loud cries of our hearts, to look down on his image in our souls now disfigured and sullied with sin; on his kingdom left desolate by the tyranny of the devil and our passions; on the vineyard which himself had planted, adorned, and fenced, but which is laid waste by merciless robbers and enemies; and that he would stretch out his almighty hand to repair these breaches and save us. So long as life lasts we can never be sure that we shall find mercy, or rest secure of the issue of our great trial upon which our eternity depends; so long, therefore, we ought never to cease with most earnest cries to implore the clemency of our Judge, laying open our spiritual miseries to him in these words of the two sisters, "Behold he, whom thou lovest, is sinking under the weight of his evils," and beg him to remember his ancient love and mercies towards us. We ought also in corporeal distempers to address ourselves to God with the like words, begging with Martha our own or our brother's corporeal health, if this may be expedient to our souls and conducive to the divine honour.

In all these petitions we ought to implore the joint supplications of the saints, as at the entreaties of the sisters Christ raised Lazarus. Having received their message, he wanted no other prompter than that of his own compassion and affection; an emblem of the paternal mercy with which he draws to himself and receives penitent sinners. Had the prodigal son offered any plea of merits or deserts, he had never deserved to find favour; but he knew the goodness and tenderness of his father, who had with restless nights waited with impatience to see him return. The tender parent wanted no motives drawn from other objects or things without himself. The paternal affection within his own breast pleaded in favour of his disobedient child. By this his very bowels yearned to embrace him again, and raise him from spiritual death to life. This same tenderness and compassion in Christ was the grounds of the sisters' confidence. Jesus,

however, deferred setting out two or three days, that his glory might be the more manifested by the greater evidence of the miracle, and by the trial of the virtue and confidence of the two holy sisters. When he arrived at Bethania, Martha went first out to meet and welcome him; and then called her sister Mary. The presence of Jesus brings every blessing and comfort; and, by it, the sisters had the joy to see their brother again restored to life when he had been four days in the grave.

Christ was again at Bethania, at the house of Simon the Leper, six days before his passion. Lazarus was one of the guests, Martha waited at table; and Mary poured a box of costly ointments on our Lord's feet, which she wiped with the hair of her head.<sup>1</sup> Judas Iscariot complained of this waste, saying that the ointment might have been sold and the price given to the poor. Not that he had any regard for the poor, but bearing the common purse he converted things sometimes to his own use, being a thief. How imperceptible a vice is covetousness, and how subtle in excuses to deceive itself! Charity interprets the actions of others in the best part; but passion hurries men into rash judgments. Judas condemned the most heroic virtue and devotion of a saint; but Jesus undertook her defence. He was pleased not with the ointment, but with the love and devotion of his fervent servant, which he suffered her to satisfy by that action, which he received as performed for the embalming of his body, his death being then at hand. He, moreover, declared that this good work which Judas condemned should be commended to the edification of his servants over the whole world wherever his gospel should be preached.

St Martha seems to have been one of those holy women who attended Christ during his passion and stood under his cross. After his ascension, she came to Marseilles and ended her life in Provence, where her body was found at Tarascon, soon after the discovery of that of St Mary Magdalen. It lies in a magnificent subterraneous chapel of the stately collegiate church at Tarascon, which is dedicated to God in her honour. King Lewis XI gave a rich bust of gold, in which the head of the saint is kept.

We have all, like St Martha, one only necessary affair; that for which alone God created and redeemed us; for which he has wrought so many wonderful mysteries in our favour, and upon which the dreadful alternative of sovereign and everlasting happiness or misery depends. This is, that we refer even all our worldly employments and all that we do to glorify God, to fulfil his will, and to save our souls.

*The following feasts are celebrated on July 29 :*

St FELIX, Pope and martyr : St MARTHA, sister of Lazarus and of Mary; she often gave hospitality to our Lord : St OLAUS, King of Norway, slain by his own infidel subjects after a reign of sixteen years : another St OLAUS, King of Sweden, martyred for his refusal to offer sacrifice to the idols of Upsal : St SIMPLICIUS, St FAUSTINUS, two brothers, and St BEATRICE, Bishop of St Brieuc in Brittany.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. ; John xii.

JULY 30

## ST ABDON AND ST SENNEN, MARTYRS

THEY were Persians, but, coming to Rome, courageously confessed the faith of Christ in the persecution of Decius in 250. They were cruelly tormented, but the more their bodies were mangled and covered with ghastly wounds, the more were their souls adorned and beautified with divine grace, and rendered glorious in the sight of heaven. The Christians at Rome did not treat them as strangers, but as brethren united to them in the hope of the same blessed country; and after their death carefully deposited their bodies in the house of a subdeacon called Quirinus. In the reign of Constantine the Great their relics were removed into the ancient burying-place of Pontian, so called from some rich man who built it: called also, from some sign, *Ad Ursum Pileatum*. It afterwards received its name from SS. Abdon and Sennen. It was situated near the Tiber, on the road to Porto, near the gates of Rome. The images of these martyrs, with Persian bonnets and crowns, on their heads, and their names are to be seen there at this day in ancient sculpture.<sup>1</sup> SS. Abdon and Sennen are mentioned in the ancient Liberian Calendar and in other Martyrologies; though their modern acts deserve no notice, as Cardinal Noris has demonstrated.<sup>2</sup>

The martyrs preferred torments and death to sin, because the love of God above all things reigned in their breasts. "We say we are Christians," says Tertullian;<sup>3</sup> "we proclaim it to the whole world, even under the hands of the executioner, and in the midst of all the torments you inflict upon us to compel us to unsay it. Torn and mangled and weltering in our blood, we cry out as loud as we are able to cry, 'That we are worshippers of God through Christ.'" Upon which Mr Reeves observes that no other religion ever produced any considerable number of martyrs except the true one. Do we ever read of any generation of men so greedy of martyrdom, who thought it long till they were upon the rack, and were so patient, so cheerful, and steadfast under the most intolerable torments? Only the Christians suffered at this rate, and they held on suffering for several hundred years together, till they had subdued the world by dying for their religion. What could engage such a number of men in such a religion, and support them in it in defiance of death in the most shocking forms, but evident truth and a superior grace and strength from above?

*The following feasts are celebrated on July 30 :*

ST ABDON and ST SENNEN, Persians who, coming to Rome, confessed their faith in Christ in the persecution in 250. The images of these martyrs, with Persian bonnets and crowns, are still seen in ancient sculpture: ST JULITTA, a rich lady of Cæsarea in Cappadocia; charged with being a Christian, she laid down cheerfully on the burning pile prepared for her: BLESSED THOMAS ABEL, BLESSED EDWARD POWELL, and BLESSED RICHARD FEATHERSTONE, martyrs in the English persecution.

<sup>1</sup> Aringhi Roma Subterranea, lib. i. c. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Noris, Diss. 3, de Epochis Syro-Macedonum.

<sup>3</sup> Apol. c. 21.

JULY 31

ST IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, CONFESSOR, FOUNDER OF  
THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

(A.D. 1556)

[His life was written by F. Lewis Gonzales or Gonzalvo, who was a long time the saint's confessor, and died at Lisbon in 1575; and again by Ribadeneira, who had intimately conversed with the saint, and died at Madrid in 1611. It is elegantly compiled in Latin by Maffei, who died at Tivoli in 1603, in Italian by Bartoli, at Rome, about 1650; and in French by Bouhours, one of the ablest and most judicious of the modern French critics in polite literature, who died at Paris in 1704. Pinius, the Bollandist, gives the original lives, Julij, t. vii. p. 409; and adds the history of many miracles wrought by the intercession of this saint; also, Baillet.]

THE conversion of many barbarous nations, several heretofore unknown to us, both in the most remote eastern and western hemisphere; the education of youth in learning and piety, the instruction of the ignorant, the improvement of all the sciences and the reformation of the manners of a great part of Christendom, is the wonderful fruit of the zeal with which this glorious saint devoted himself to labour in exalting the glory of God and in spreading over the whole world that fire which Christ himself came to kindle on earth. St Ignatius was born in 1491, in the castle of Loyola in Guipuscoa, a part of Biscay that reaches to the Pyrenean mountains. His father, Don Bertram, was Lord of Oinez and Loyola, head of one of the most ancient and noble families of that country. His mother, Mary Saez de Balde, was not less illustrious by her extraction. They had three daughters and eight sons. The youngest of all these was Inigo or Ignatius. He was well shaped, and in his childhood gave proofs of a pregnant wit and discretion above his years; was affable and obliging, but of a warm or choleric disposition, and had an ardent passion for glory. He was bred in the court of Ferdinand V in quality of page to the king, under the care and protection of Antony Manriquez, Duke of Najara, grandee of Spain, who was his kinsman and patron; and who, perceiving his inclinations, led him to the army, took care to have him taught all the exercises proper to make him an accomplished officer. The love of glory and the example of his elder brothers, who had signalized themselves in the wars of Naples, made him impatient till he entered the service. He behaved with great valour and conduct in the army, especially at the taking of Najara, a small town on the frontiers of Biscay; yet he generously declined taking any part of the booty, in which he might have challenged the greatest share. He hated gaming as an offspring of avarice, and a source of quarrels and other evils; was dextrous in the management of affairs, and had an excellent talent in making up differences among the soldiers. He was generous even towards enemies, but addicted to gallantry and full of the maxims of worldly honour, vanity, and pleasures. Though he had no tincture of learning, he made tolerable good verses in Spanish, having

a natural genius for poetry. A poem which he composed in praise of St Peter was much commended.

Charles V, who had succeeded King Ferdinand, was chosen emperor, and obliged to go into Germany. Francis I, King of France, a martial prince, having been his competitor for the empire, resented his disappointment and became an implacable enemy to the emperor and the house of Austria. He declared war against Charles with a view to recover Navarre, of which Ferdinand had lately dispossessed John of Albert, and which Charles still held, contrary to the treaty of Noyon, by which he was obliged to restore it in six months. Francis therefore, in 1521, sent a great army into Spain under the command of Andrew de Foix, younger brother of the famous Lautrec, who, passing the Pyreneans, laid siege to Pampeluna, the capital of Navarre. Ignatius had been left there by the viceroy, not to command, but to encourage the garrison. He did all that lay in his power to persuade them to defend the city, but in vain. However, when he saw them open the gates to the enemy, to save his own honour he retired into the citadel with only one soldier who had the heart to follow him. The garrison of this fortress deliberated likewise whether they should surrender, but Ignatius encouraged them to stand their ground. The French attacked the place with great fury, and with their artillery made a wide breach in the wall, and attempted to take it by assault. Ignatius appeared upon the breach, at the head of the bravest part of the garrison, and with his sword in his hand endeavoured to drive back the enemy; but, in the heat of the combat, a shot from a cannon broke from the wall a bit of stone which struck and bruised his left leg; and the ball itself in the rebound broke and shivered his right leg. The garrison, seeing him fall, surrendered at discretion.

The French used their victory with moderation and treated the prisoners well, especially Ignatius, in consideration of his quality and valour. They carried him to the general's quarters, and soon after sent him, in a litter carried by two men, to the castle of Loyola, which was not far from Pampeluna. Being arrived there he felt great pain; for the bones had been ill set, as is often the case in the hurry after a battle. The surgeons therefore judged it necessary to break his leg again, which he suffered without any concern. But a violent fever followed the second setting, which was attended with dangerous symptoms and reduced him to an extreme degree of weakness, so that the physicians declared that he could not live many days. He received the sacraments on the eve of the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, and it was believed that he could not hold out till the next morning. Nevertheless God, who had great designs of mercy upon him, was pleased to restore him to his health in the following manner: Ignatius always had a singular devotion to St Peter, and implored his intercession in his present distress with great confidence. In the night he thought he saw, in a dream,

that apostle touch him and cure him. When he awaked he found himself out of danger; his pains left him and his strength began to return, so that he ever after looked upon this recovery as miraculous; yet he still retained the spirit of the world. After the second setting of his leg, the end of a bone stuck out under his knee which was a visible deformity. Though the surgeons told him the operation would be very painful, this protuberance he caused to be cut off, merely that his boot and stockings might sit handsomely; and he would neither be bound nor held, and scarce ever changed countenance whilst the bone was partly sawed and partly cut off, though the pain must have been excessive. Because his right leg remained shorter than the left, he would be for many days together put upon a kind of rack, and with an iron engine he violently stretched and drew out that leg; but all to little purpose, for he remained lame his whole life after.

During the cure of his knee he was confined to his bed, though otherwise in perfect health, and finding the time tedious he called for some book of romances, for he had been always much delighted with fabulous histories of knight-errantry. None such being then found in the castle of Loyola, a book of the lives of our Saviour and of the saints was brought him. He read them first only to pass away the time, but afterwards began to relish them and to spend whole days in reading them. He chiefly admired in the saints their love of solitude and of the cross. He considered among the anchorets many persons of quality who buried themselves alive in caves and dens, pale with fasting, and covered with haircloth; and he said to himself, "These men were of the same frame I am of; why then should not I do what they have done?" In the fervour of his good resolutions he thought of visiting the Holy Land and becoming a hermit. But these pious motions soon vanished; and his passion for glory, and a secret inclination for a rich lady in Castile, with a view to marriage, again filled his mind with thoughts of the world; till, returning to the lives of the saints, he perceived in his own heart the emptiness of all worldly glory, and that only God could content the soul. This vicissitude and fluctuation of mind continued some time; but he observed this difference, that the thoughts which were from God filled his soul with consolation, peace, and tranquillity; whereas the others brought indeed some sensible delight, but left a certain bitterness and heaviness in the heart. This mark he lays down in his book of spiritual exercises as the ground of the rules for the discernment of the spirit of God and the world in all the motions of the soul; as does Cardinal Bona and all other writers who treat of the discernment of spirits in the interior life. Taking at last a firm resolution to imitate the saints in their heroic practice of virtue, he began to treat his body with all the rigour it was able to bear; he rose at midnight and spent his retired hours in weeping for his sins.

One night, being prostrate before an image of the Blessed Virgin, in



extraordinary sentiments of fervour, he consecrated himself to the service of his Redeemer under her patronage, and vowed an inviolable fidelity. When he had ended his prayer he heard a great noise; the house shook, the windows of his chamber were broken, and a rent was made in the wall which remains to this day, says the latest writer of his life. God might by this sign testify his acceptance of his sacrifice; as a like sign happened in the place where the faithful were assembled after Christ's ascension,<sup>1</sup> and in the prison of Paul and Silas;<sup>2</sup> or this might be an effect of the rage of the devil. Another night Ignatius saw the Mother of God environed with light, holding the infant Jesus in her arms; this vision replenished his soul with spiritual delight and made all sensual pleasure and worldly objects insipid to him ever after. The saint's eldest brother, who was then, by the death of their father, lord of Loyola, endeavoured to detain him in the world, and to persuade him not to throw away the great advantages of the honour and reputation which his valour had gained him. But Ignatius being cured of his wounds, under pretence of paying a visit to the Duke of Najara, who had often come to see him during his illness, and who lived at Navarret, turned another way, and sending his two servants back from Navarret to Loyola, went to Montserrat. This was a great abbey of near three hundred Benedictin monks, of a reformed austere institute, situate on a mountain of difficult access, about four leagues in circumference and two leagues high, in the diocese of Barcelona. The monastery was first founded for nuns by the sovereign counts of Barcelona about the year 880, but was given to monks in 990. It has been much augmented by several kings of Spain, and is very famous for a miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin, and a great resort of pilgrims.

There lived at that time in this monastery a monk of great sanctity named John Chanones, a Frenchman, who being formerly vicar-general to the Bishop of Mirepoix, in the thirty-first year of his age resigned his ecclesiastical preferments and took the monastic habit in this place. He lived to the age of eighty-eight years, never eating any flesh, watching great part of the night in prayer, dividing his whole time between heavenly contemplation and the service of his neighbour; and giving to all Spain an example of the most perfect obedience, humility, charity, devotion, and all other virtues. To this experienced director Ignatius addressed himself, and after his preparation, was three days in making to him a general confession, which he often interrupted by the abundance of his tears. He made a vow of perpetual chastity, and dedicated himself with great fervour to the divine service. At his first coming to this place he had bought, at the village of Montserrat, a long coat of coarse cloth, a girdle, a pair of sandals, a wallet, and a pilgrim's staff, intending, after he had finished his devotions there, to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Disguised in this

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii.<sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 26.

habit, he remained at the abbey. He communicated to his director a plan of the austerities he proposed to practise, and was confirmed by him in his good resolutions. He received the blessed eucharist early in the morning on the feast of the Annunciation of our Lady, in 1522; and on the same day left Montserrat for fear of being discovered, having given his horse to the monastery and hung up his sword on a pillar near the altar in testimony of his renouncing the secular warfare and entering himself in that of Christ. He travelled with his staff in his hand, a scrip by his side, bare-headed, and with one foot bare, the other being covered because it was yet tender and swelled. He went away infinitely pleased that he had cast off the livery of the world and put on that of Jesus Christ. He had bestowed his rich clothes on a beggar at his coming out of Montserrat; but the poor man was thrown into prison on suspicion of theft. Ignatius being sent after by the magistrates and brought back, told the truth to release him, but would not discover his own name.

Three leagues from Montserrat is a large village called Manresa, with a convent of Dominicans, and a hospital without the walls for pilgrims and sick persons. Ignatius went to this hospital, and rejoicing to see himself received in it unknown and among the poor, began to fast on water and bread (which he begged) the whole week, except Sundays, when he ate a few boiled herbs, but sprinkled over with ashes. He wore an iron girdle and a hair shirt; disciplined himself thrice a day, slept little, and lay on the ground. He was every day present at the whole divine office, spent seven hours on his knees at prayer, and received the sacraments every Sunday. To add humiliation to his bodily austerities, he affected a clownishness in his behaviour, and went begging about the streets with his face covered with dirt, his hair rough, and his beard and nails grown out to a frightful length. The children threw stones at him and followed him with scornful shouts in the streets. Ignatius suffered these insults without saying one word, rejoicing secretly in his heart to share in the reproaches of the cross. The more mortifying the noisomeness of the hospital and the company of beggars were, the more violence he offered to himself, that he might bear them cheerfully. The story of the fine suit of clothes given to the beggar at Montserrat, and the patience and devotion of the holy man, made him soon to be revered as some fervent penitent in disguise. To shun this danger, he privately hid himself in a dark deep cave in a solitary valley, called The Vale of Paradise, covered with briers, half a mile from the town. Here he much increased his mortifications till he was accidentally found half-dead, and carried back to Manresa and lodged in the hospital.

After enjoying peace of mind and heavenly consolations from the time of his conversion, he was here visited with the most terrible trial of fears and scruples. He found no comfort in prayer, no relief in fasting, no

remedy in disciplines, no consolation from the sacraments, and his soul was overwhelmed with bitter sadness. The Dominicans, out of compassion, took him out of the hospital into their convent; but his melancholy only increased upon him. He apprehended some sin in every step he took, and seemed often on the very brink of despair; but he was in the hands of Him whose trials are favours. He most earnestly implored the divine assistance, and took no sustenance for seven days, till his confessor obliged him to eat. Soon after this his tranquillity of mind was perfectly restored, and his soul overflowed with spiritual joy. From this experience he acquired a particular talent for curing scrupulous consciences, and a singular light to discern them. His prayer was accompanied with many heavenly raptures, and he received from God a supernatural knowledge and sense of sublime divine mysteries: yet he concealed all from the eyes of men, only disclosing himself to his two confessors, the pious monk of Montserrat and the Dominican of Manresa; however, the people began to reverence him as a living saint, which they particularly testified during a violent fever into which his austerities cast him three times.

Too nice a worldly prudence may condemn the voluntary humiliations which the saint sometimes made choice of; but the wisdom of God is above that of the world, and the Holy Ghost sometimes inspires certain heroic souls to seek perfectly to die to themselves by certain practices which are extraordinary, and which would not be advisable to others; and if affected or undertaken with obstinacy and against advice, would be pernicious and criminal. Ignatius, by perfect compunction, humility, self-denial, contempt of the world, severe interior trials, and assiduous meditation, was prepared by the divine grace to be raised to an extraordinary gift of supernatural prayer. He afterwards assured F. Lainez that he had learned more of divine mysteries by prayer in one hour at Manresa than all the doctors of the schools could ever have taught him. He was there favoured with many raptures and divine illustrations concerning the Trinity, of which he afterwards spoke with so much light and unction, that the most learned admired him and the ignorant were instructed. In like manner, in various wonderful ecstasies, he was enlightened concerning the beauty and order of the creation, the excess of divine love which shines forth to man in the sacrament of the altar and many other mysteries. So imperfect was his knowledge of his duties when he first renounced the world that, hearing a certain Moresco or Mahometan, speak injuriously of the holy Mother of God, when he set out from Loyola for Montserrat, he deliberated whether, being an officer, he ought not to kill him, though the divine protection preserved him from so criminal an action. But at Manresa he made so good a progress in the school of virtue, as to become qualified already to be a guide to others. He stayed there almost a year, during which time he governed himself by the advice of the holy monk

of Montserrat, whom he visited every week, and that of his Dominican director.

Spain, in that and the foregoing age, abounded with many learned and experienced persons in that way, endowed with an eminent spirit and a perfect experimental knowledge of Christian piety; witness the works of St Peter of Alcantara, John of Avila, St Teresa, Bartholomew de Martyribus, Lewis of Granada, and others. Our saint had the happiness to fall into the hands of prudent and able guides, and giving his heart to God without reserve, became himself in a short time an accomplished master; and whereas he at first only proposed to himself his own perfection, he afterwards burned with an ardent desire of contributing to the salvation of others; and commiserating the blindness of sinners, and considering how much the glory of God shines in the sanctification of souls purchased with the blood of his Son, he said to himself, "It is not enough that I serve the Lord; all hearts ought to love him, and all tongues ought to praise him." With this view, in order to be admitted more freely to converse with persons in the world, he chose a dress which, being more decent than the penitential garments which he at first wore, might not be disagreeable to others; and he moderated his excessive austerities.

He began then to exhort many to the love of virtue; and he there wrote his *Spiritual Exercises*, which he afterwards revised and published at Rome in 1548. Though the saint was at that time unacquainted with learning, any further than barely to read and write, yet this book is so full of excellent maxims and instructions in the highest points of a spiritual life, that it is most clear that the Holy Ghost supplied abundantly what was yet wanting in him of human learning and study. The spirit which reigns in this book was that of all the saints. When some pretended to find fault with this book of St Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, Pope Paul III, at the request of St Francis Borgia by a brief, in 1548, approved it as full of the Spirit of God, and very useful for the edification and spiritual profit of the faithful.

The pestilence which raged in Italy having ceased, Ignatius, after a stay of ten months at Manresa, left that place for Barcelona, neither regarding the tears of those who sought to detain him, nor admitting any to bear him company, nor consenting to accept any money for the expenses of his journey. He took shipping at Barcelona, and in five days landed at Gaeta, whence he travelled on foot to Rome, Padua, and Venice, through villages, the towns being shut for fear of the plague. He spent the Easter at Rome, and sailed from Venice on board the admiral's vessel, which was carrying the governor of Cyprus. The sailors were a profligate crew, and seemed entirely to neglect prayer and all duties of religion, and their discourse was often lewd and profane. Ignatius having reproved them for their licentiousness, his zeal made them conspire to leave him ashore in a

desert island; but a gust of wind from the land hindered the ship from touching upon it. He arrived at Cyprus and found in a port a vessel full of pilgrims, just ready to hoist sail. Going immediately on board, he made a good voyage and landed at Jaffa, the ancient Joppe, on the last day of August 1523, forty days after he had left Venice. He went on foot from thence to Jerusalem in four days. The sight of the holy places filled his soul with joy, and the most ardent sentiments of devotion and compunction, and he desired to stay there to labour in the conversion of the Mahometans. The provincial of the Franciscans, by virtue of his authority from the holy see over the pilgrims, commanded him to leave Palestine. Ignatius obeyed, but slipped privately back to satisfy his devotion again in visiting twice more the print of our Saviour's feet on Mount Olivet.

He returned to Europe in winter, in extreme cold weather, poorly clad, and came to Venice at the end of January in 1524; from whence he continued his journey by Genoa to Barcelona. Desiring to qualify himself for the functions of the altar, and for assisting spiritually his neighbour, he began at Barcelona to study grammar, and addressed himself to a famous master named Jerom Ardebal, being assisted in the meantime in his maintenance by the charities of a pious lady of that city called Isabel Rosella. He was then thirty-three years old; and it is not hard to conceive what difficulties he must go through in learning the rudiments of grammar at that age. Moreover, he seemed, by his military employments and after his retreat by his contemplative life, very unfit for such an undertaking. At first, his mind was so fixed only on God that he forgot everything he read, and conjugating *amo*, for example, could only repeat to himself, "I love God; I am loved by God," and the like; but resisting this as a temptation, he began to make some progress, still joining contemplation and extraordinary austerities with his studies. He bore the jeers and taunts of the little boys, his schoolfellows, with joy. Hearing that a poor man called Lasano had hanged himself on a beam in his chamber, he ran to him, cut the rope, and prayed by him till the man returned to himself, though he had before seemed perfectly dead to all the bystanders. Lasano made his confession, received the sacraments, and soon after expired. This fact was regarded in the city as miraculous.

Some persons persuaded Ignatius to read Erasmus's Christian Soldier, an elegant book wrote by that master of style, at the request of an officer's pious lady for the use of her husband, a man of loose morals. The saint always found his heart dry after reading this or any other of that author's works; which made him afterwards caution those of his society against reading them, at least very much. Though in that writer's paraphrase on the Lord's Prayer, and other such treatises of piety, we find very pious sentiments collected from great authors, and elegantly and concisely expressed, yet a devout reader finds the language of the heart wanting.

On the other side, it is well known how much St Ignatius read daily and recommended to all others the incomparable book, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, which he made frequent use of, to nourish and increase the fervour of his soul. He lodged at the house of one Agnes Pascal, a devout woman. Her son, John Pascal, a pious youth, would sometimes rise in the night to observe what Ignatius did in his chamber, and saw him sometimes on his knees, sometimes prostrate on the ground, his countenance on fire, and often in tears, repeating such words as these: "O God, my love and the delight of my soul, if men knew thee, they could never offend thee! My God, how good art thou to bear with such a sinner as I am!"

The saint, after studying two years at Barcelona, went to the university of Alcala, which had been lately founded by Cardinal Ximenes, where he attended at the same time to lectures in logic, physics, and divinity; by which multiplicity he only confounded his ideas and learned nothing at all, though he studied night and day. He lodged in a chamber of an hospital, lived by begging a small subsistence, and wore a coarse grey habit, in which he was imitated by four companions. He catechised children, held assemblies of devotion in the hospital, and by his mild reprehensions converted many loose livers, and among others one of the richest prelates in Spain. Some accused him of sorcery and of the heresy of certain visionaries lately condemned in Spain, under the name of the *Illuminati*, or *Men of New Light*; but, upon examination, he was justified by the inquisitors. After this, for teaching the catechism, being a man without learning or authority, he was accused to the bishop's grand vicar, who confined him to close prison two-and-forty days, but declared him innocent of any fault by a public sentence, on the 1st day of June 1527; yet forbidding him and his companions to wear any singular habit, or to give any instructions in religious matters, being illiterate persons. Ignatius rejoiced in his jail that he suffered though innocent, but spoke with such piety that many called him another St Paul in prison. Being enlarged, he went about the streets with a public officer, to beg money to buy a scholar's dress, in which action he rejoiced at the insults and affronts which he met with. However, he went himself to the Archbishop of Toledo, Alphonsus de Fonseca, who was much pleased with him, but advised him to leave Alcala and go to Salamanca, promising him his protection. Ignatius, in this latter place, began to draw many to virtue, and was followed by great numbers, which exposed him again to suspicions of introducing dangerous practices, and the grand vicar of Salamanca imprisoned him; but after two-and-twenty days declared him innocent, and a person of sincere virtue. Ignatius looked upon prisons, sufferings, and ignominy as the height of his ambition; and God was pleased to purge and sanctify his soul by these trials. Recovering his liberty again, he resolved to leave Spain.

He from that time began to wear shoes, and received money sent him

by his friends, but in the middle of winter travelled on foot to Paris, where he arrived in the beginning of February 1528. He spent two years in perfecting himself in the Latin tongue; then went through a course of philosophy. He lived first in Montaigne College; but being robbed of his money was obliged to lodge in the hospital of St James, to beg his bread from day to day, and in the vacation time to go into Flanders, and once into England, to procure charities from the Spanish merchants settled there, from whom and from some friends at Barcelona he received abundant supplies. He studied his philosophy three years and a half in the college of St Barbara. He had induced many of his schoolfellows to spend the Sundays and holy-days in prayer, and to apply themselves more fervently to the practice of good works. Pegna, his master, thought he hindered their studies, and finding him not corrected by his admonitions, prepossessed Govea, principal of the college of St Barbara, against him, so that he was ordered by him to undergo the greatest punishment then in use in that university, called "The Hall," which was a public whipping, that this infamy might deter others from following him. The regents came all into the hall with rods in their hands, ready to lash the seditious student. Ignatius offered himself joyfully to suffer all things; yet, apprehending lest the scandal of this disgrace should make those whom he had reclaimed fall back, when they saw him condemned as a corrupter of youth, went to the principal in his chamber, and modestly laid open to him the sentiments of his soul and the reasons of his conduct; and offered himself, as much as concerned his own person, that any sacrifice should be made of his body and fame, but begged of him to consider the scandal some might receive, who were yet young and tender in virtue. Govea made him no answer, but taking him by the hand led him into the hall where, at the ringing of the bell, the whole college stood ready assembled. When all saw the principal enter and expected the sign for the punishment, he threw himself at the feet of Ignatius, begging his pardon for having too lightly believed such false reports; then, rising, he publicly declared that Ignatius was a living saint, and had no other aim or desire than the salvation of souls, and was ready to suffer joyfully any infamous punishment. Such a reparation of honour gave the saint the highest reputation, and even the ancient and experienced doctors asked his advice in spiritual matters. Pegna himself was ever after his great admirer and friend, and appointed another scholar, who was more advanced in his studies, and a young man of great virtue and quick parts, to assist him in his exercises. This was Peter Faber, a Savoyard, a native of the diocese of Geneva, by whose help he finished his philosophy and took the degree of master of arts with great applause, after a course of three years and a half, according to the custom of the times. After this Ignatius began his divinity at the Dominicans.

Peter Faber had from his childhood made a vow of chastity, which he

had always most faithfully kept, yet was troubled with violent temptations, from which the most rigorous fasts did not deliver him. He was also tempted to vainglory, and laboured under great anxiety and scruples about these temptations, which he at length disclosed to Ignatius, his only pupil, whose skilful and heavenly advice was a healing balsam to his soul. The saint at last prescribed him a course of his spiritual exercises, and taught him the practices of meditation, of the particular examination, and other means of perfection, conducting him through all the paths of an interior life. St Francis Xavier, a young master of philosophy, full of the vanity of the schools, was his next conquest. St Ignatius made him sensible that all mortal glory is emptiness; only that which is eternal deserving our regard. He converted many abandoned sinners. When a young man, engaged in a criminal commerce with a woman of the city, was proof against his exhortations, Ignatius stood in a frozen pond by the wayside up to the neck, and as he passed by in the night, cried out to him, "Whither are you going? Do not you hear the thunder of divine justice over your head, ready to break upon you? Go then; satisfy your brutish passion; here I will suffer for you, to appease heaven." The lewd young man, at first affrighted then confounded, returned back and changed his life. By the like pious stratagems the saint recovered many other souls from the abysses into which they were fallen. He often served the sick in the hospitals; and one day finding a repugnance to touch the ulcers of one sick of a contagious distemper, to overcome himself he not only dressed his sores, but put his hand from them to his mouth, saying, "Since thou art afraid for one part, thy whole body shall take its share." From that time he felt no natural repugnance in such actions.

James Laynez, of Almazan, twenty-one years of age; Alphonsus Salmeron, only eighteen; and Nicholas Alphonso, surnamed Bobadilla, from the place of his birth, near Valencia, all Spaniards of great parts, at that time students in divinity at Paris, associated themselves to the saint in his pious exercises. Simon Rodriguez, a Portuguese, joined them. These fervent students, moved by the pressing instances and exhortations of Ignatius, made all together a vow to renounce the world, to go to preach the gospel in Palestine, or if they could not go thither within a year after they had finished their studies, to offer themselves to his holiness to be employed, in the service of God, in what manner he should judge best. They fixed for the end of all their studies the 25th day of January, in 1537, and pronounced this vow aloud in the holy subterraneous chapel, at Montmartre, after they had all received the holy communion from Peter Faber, who had been lately ordained priest. This was done on the feast of the Assumption of our Lady, in 1534. Ignatius continued frequent conferences, and joint exercises, to animate his companions in their good purposes; but soon after was ordered by the physicians to try his native air, for the



cure of a lingering indisposition. He left Paris in the beginning of the year 1535, and was most honourably and joyfully received in Guipuscoa, by his elder brother, Garcias, and his nephews, and by all the clergy in processions. He refused to go to the castle of Loyola, taking up his quarters in the hospital of Azpetia. The sight of the places, where he had led a worldly life, excited in him the deepest sentiments of compunction, and he chastised his body with a rough hair shirt, iron chains, disciplines, watching, and prayer. He recovered his health in a short time, and catechised and instructed the poor with incredible fruit. Ignatius, in his childhood, had, with some companions robbed an orchard, for which another man had been condemned to pay the damages. In the first discourse he made he accused himself publicly of this fact, and calling the poor man, who was present, declared that he had been falsely accused, and for reparation gave him two farms which belonged to him, begging his pardon before all the people, adding that this was one of the reasons of his journey thither.

In the meantime three others, all doctors in divinity, by the exhortations of Faber, joined the saint's companions in Paris. Claudius le Jay, a Savoyard, John Codure, a native of Dauphine, and Pasquier Brouet, of Picardy; so that with Ignatius they were now ten in number. The holy founder, after a tedious and dangerous journey, both by sea and land, arrived at Venice about the end of the year 1536, and his nine companions from Paris met him there on the 8th of January, 1537; they employed themselves in the hospitals, but all, except Ignatius, went to Rome, where Pope Paul III received them graciously and granted them an indult, that those who were not priests might receive holy orders from what bishop they pleased. They were accordingly ordained at Venice by the Bishop of Arbe. Ignatius was one of this number. After their ordination they retired into a cottage near Vicenza, to prepare themselves in solitude, by fasting and prayer, for the holy ministry of the altar. The rest said their first masses in September and October, but Ignatius deferred his, from month to month, till Christmas-day, overflowing in his retirement with heavenly consolation and in danger of losing his sight through the abundance of his tears. Thus he employed a whole year in preparing himself to offer that adorable sacrifice. After this they dispersed themselves into several places about Verona and Vicenza, preaching penance to the people and living on a little bread which they begged. The emperor and the Venetians having declared war against the Turks, their pilgrimage into Palestine was rendered impracticable. The year therefore being elapsed, Ignatius, Faber, and Laynez went to Rome, threw themselves at his holiness's feet, and offered themselves to whatever work he should judge best to employ them in. St Ignatius told his companions at Vicenza that if any one asked what their institute was, they might answer, "the Society of Jesus"; because

they were united to fight against heresies and vice under the standard of Christ. In his road from Vicenza to Rome, praying in a little chapel between Sienna and Rome he, in an ecstasy, seemed to see the eternal Father who affectionately commended him to his Son. Jesus Christ appeared at the same time also shining with an unspeakable light, but loaded with a heavy cross, and sweetly said to Ignatius, "I will be favourable to you at Rome." This St Ignatius disclosed to F. Laynez, in a transport when he came out of the chapel; and F. Laynez, when he was general, related it to all the fathers in Rome in a domestic conference, at which F. Ribadeneira, who records it, was present. The same was attested by others to whom the saint had discovered this signal favour. Pope Paul III accordingly received them graciously; and appointed Faber, called in French *Le Fevre*, to teach in the Sapienza at Rome scholastic divinity, and Laynez to explain the holy scripture; whilst Ignatius laboured, by means of his spiritual exercises and instructions, to reform the manners of the people.

The holy founder, with a view to perpetuate the work of God, called to Rome all his companions, and proposed to them his design and motives of forming themselves into a religious Order. After recommending the matter to God by fasting and prayer, all agreed in the proposal, and resolved first, besides the vows of poverty and chastity already made by them, to add a third of perpetual obedience, the more perfectly to conform themselves to the Son of God, who was obedient even to death; and to establish a general whom all, by their vow, should be bound to obey, who should be perpetual, and his authority absolute, subject entirely to the pope, but not liable to be restrained by chapters. He likewise determined to prescribe a fourth vow of going wherever the pope should send them for the salvation of souls, and even without money, if it should so please him; also that the professed Jesuits should possess no real estates or revenues, either in particular or in common; but that colleges might enjoy revenues and rents for the maintenance of students of the Order. In the meanwhile Govea, principal of the college of St Barbara at Paris, had recommended the Jesuits to the King of Portugal as proper missionaries for the conversion of the Indies, and that prince asked of Ignatius six labourers for that purpose. The founder having only ten, could send him no more than two, Simon Rodriguez, who remained in Portugal, and Xavier, afterwards the apostle of the Indies. The three cardinals appointed by the pope to examine the affair of this new Order, at first opposed it, thinking religious orders already too much multiplied, but changed their opinions on a sudden, and Pope Paul III approved it under the title of "*The Society of Jesus*," by a bull, dated the 27th of September, 1540. Ignatius was chosen the first upon his office on Easter-day, 1541, and the members all made their religious vows, according to the bull of their institution.

Ignatius then set himself to write constitutions or rules for his Society, in which he lays down its end to be, in the first place, the sanctification of their own souls by joining together the active and the contemplative life; for nothing so much qualifies a minister of God to save others as the sanctification of his own soul in the first place. Secondly, to labour for the salvation and perfection of their neighbour, and this, first, by catechising the ignorant (which work is the basis and ground of religion and virtue, and though mean and humble, is the most necessary and indispensable duty of every pastor); secondly, by the instruction of youth in piety and learning (upon which the reformation of the world principally depends); and thirdly, by the direction of consciences, missions, and the like.

St Ignatius would have the office of general to be perpetual or for life, being persuaded this would better command the respect of inferiors, and more easily enable him to undertake and carry on great enterprises for the glory of God, which require a considerable time to have them well executed. Nevertheless, he often strenuously endeavoured to resign that dignity, but was never able to compass it; and at length the pope forbade him any more to attempt it. He had no sooner taken that charge upon him than he went into the kitchen and served as a scullion under the cook, and he continued for forty-six days to catechise poor children in the church of the Society. By preaching he gained such an ascendant over the hearts of the people as produced many wonderful conversions. Among the pious establishments which he made at Rome, he founded a house for the reception of Jews who should be converted, during the time of their instruction, and another for the reception and maintenance of lewd women who should be desirous to enter upon virtuous courses, yet were not called to a religious state among the Magdalens or penitents. When one told him that the conversion of such sinners is seldom sincere, he answered, "To prevent only one sin would be a great happiness, though it cost me ever so great pains." He procured two houses to be erected at Rome for the relief of poor orphans of both sexes, and another for the maintenance of young women whose poverty might expose their virtue to danger. The heart of this blessed man so burned with charity, that he was continually thinking and speaking of what might most contribute to promote the divine honour and sanctification of souls; and he did wonders by the zealous fathers of his Society in all parts of the globe. He was entreated by many princes and cities of Italy, Spain, Germany, and the Low Countries to afford them some of his labourers. Under the auspicious protection of John III, King of Portugal, he sent St Francis Xavier into the East Indies, where he gained a new world to the faith of Christ. He sent John Nugnez and Lewis Gonzales into the kingdoms of Fez and Morocco to instruct and assist the Christian slaves; in 1547, four others to Congo in Africa; in 1555, thirteen into Abyssinia, among whom John Nugnez was nominated

by Pope Julius III patriarch of Ethiopia, and two others, bishops; lastly, others into the Portuguese settlements in South America.

Pope Paul III commissioned the fathers James Laynez and Alphonsus Salmeron to assist, in quality of his theologians, at the council of Trent. Before their departure St Ignatius, among other instructions, gave them a charge in all disputations to be careful above all things, to preserve modesty and humility, and to shun all confidence, contentiousness, or empty display of learning. F. Claudius Le Jay appeared in the same council as theologian of Cardinal Otho, Bishop of Ausberg. Many of the first disciples of St Ignatius distinguished themselves in divers kingdoms of Europe, but none with greater reputation, both for learning and piety, than Peter Canisius, who was a native of Nimeguen, in the Low Countries, and having with wonderful success employed his zealous labours at Ingolstadt and in several other parts of Germany, and in Bohemia, died in the odour of sanctity at Fribourg, in 1597, seventy-seven years old.<sup>1</sup> Whilst F. Claudius Le Jay was at Trent, Ferdinand, King of the Romans, nominated him Bishop of Trieste. The good father seemed ready to die of grief at this news, and wrote to St Ignatius humbly requesting him to put some bar to this promotion. The holy founder was himself alarmed, and by a pressing letter to the king, prevailed upon him not to do what would be an irreparable prejudice to his young Society. He urged to the pope and sacred college many reasons why he desired that all the fathers of his Society should be excluded from all ecclesiastical dignities, alleging that this would be a means more easily to preserve among them a spirit of humility and poverty, which is the very soul and perfection of their state; and that, being missionaries, it was more advantageous to the church that they should remain such, always ready to fly from pole to pole, as the public necessity should require. The pope being satisfied with his reasons, the saints obliged all professed Jesuits to bind themselves by a simple vow never to seek prelatures, and to refuse them when offered, unless compelled by a precept of the pope to accept them.

In 1546 the Jesuits first opened their schools in Europe, in the college which St Francis Borgia had erected for them at Gandia, with the privileges of a university.<sup>2</sup> The seminary of Goa, in Asia, which had been erected some years before for the Indian missions, was committed to the Jesuits, under the direction of Francis Xavier, the preceding year. King John also founded for them, in 1546, a noble college at Coïmba, the second which they had in Europe. F. Simon Rodriguez directed this establishment and many others in Portugal, Spain, and Brazil, and died at Lisbon, in the highest reputation for sanctity and learning in 1579. Among the rules which St Ignatius gave to the masters, he principally inculcated the

<sup>1</sup> See his edifying life by Raderus and Sacchini and in the Supplement to this work.  
<sup>2</sup> Bouhours, lib. iv.; Orlandin. Hist. Soc. lib. vii. c. 25.

lessons of humility, modesty, and devotion; he prescribed that all their scholars should hear mass every day, go to confession every month, and always begin their studies by prayer; that their masters should take every fit occasion to inspire them with the love of heavenly things; and that by daily meditation, self-examination, pious readings, retreat, and the constant exercise of the divine presence, they should nourish in their own souls a fervent spirit of prayer, which without the utmost care is extinguished by a dry course of studies and school disputations, and with it are destroyed the very soul of a religious or spiritual life. He recommended nothing more earnestly, both to professors and scholars, than that they should dedicate all their labours, with the greatest fervour to the greater glory of God, which intention will make studies equal to prayer. He treated very harshly all those whom learning rendered self-conceited or less devout; and removed all those masters who discovered any fondness for singular opinions. It is incredible with what attention and industry he promoted emulation and every means that could be a spur to scholars. He required that copies of some of the principal literary performances should be sent from all the colleges to Rome, where he had them examined before him, that he might better judge of the progress both of masters and scholars.

St Francis Borgia, in 1551, gave a considerable sum towards building the Roman college for the Jesuits. Pope Julius III contributed largely to it; Paul IV, in 1555, founded it for perpetuity with great munificence; afterwards Gregory XIII much augmented its buildings and revenues. St Ignatius, intending to make this the model of all his other colleges, neglected nothing to render it complete, and took care that it should be supplied with the ablest masters in all the sciences, and with all possible helps for the advancement of literature. He made it a strict rule in the Society that everyone should study to speak correctly the language of the country where he lives;<sup>1</sup> for, without being perfect in the vulgar tongue, no one can be qualified to preach or perform many other functions with profit. On this account he established in the Roman college daily lessons in the Italian tongue, and he carefully studied that language, and appointed others to put him in mind of all the faults which he should commit in speaking. St Ignatius also directed the foundation of the German college in Rome made by Julius III, but afterwards finished by Gregory XIII. He often met with violent persecutions, but overcame them by meekness and patience. When the French king, Henry II, gave the Society letters patent to settle in France, the parliament of Paris made the most outrageous remonstrances, and the faculty of Sorbon, though not without opposition, passed a virulent decree against it. The other fathers at Rome thought it necessary to answer these censures; but St Ignatius would have nothing printed or written in their defence, saying that it was better to

<sup>1</sup> Orland. Hist. Soc. lib. xvi.

commit their cause to God, and that the slanders raised against them would fall of themselves; and so it happened. Indeed, the storm was too violent to last. Upon other occasions the saint modestly defended his institute against slanderers.

The prudence and charity of the saint in his conduct towards his religious won him all their hearts. His commands seemed rather entreaties. The address with which he accommodated himself to everyone's particular genius, and the mildness with which he tempered his reproofs, gave to his reprehensions a sweetness which gained the affections, whilst it corrected a fault. Thus chiding one for his too little guard over his eyes, he said to him with tenderness, "I have often admired the modesty of your deportment, yet observe that unguarded glances often escape you." When another had fixed his eye steadfastly upon him a long time, the saint enjoined him to make the government of his eye the subject of his particular examination, and to say every day a short prayer for fifteen months. He extremely recommended a strict modesty in the whole exterior as the index of the interior and a means absolutely necessary for the regulating of it, and the government of the senses and passions. He always showed the affection of the most tender parent towards all his brethern especially towards the sick, for whom he was solicitous to procure every spiritual and even temporal succour and comfort, which it was his great delight to give them himself. The most perfect obedience and self-denial were the two first lessons which he inculcated to his novices, whom he told at the door as they entered that they must leave behind them all self-will and private judgment. In his famous letter to the Portuguese Jesuits, On the Virtue of Obedience, he says, this alone bringeth forth and nourisheth all other virtues; and calls it the peculiar virtue and distinguishing mark and characteristic of his Society in which, if any member suffer himself to be outdone by those of other Orders in fasting or watching that he must yield to none in obedience. He adds true obedience must reach the understanding as well as the will and never suffer a person even secretly to complain of or censure the precept of a superior, whom he must always consider as vested with the authority of Jesus Christ over him. He says it is not a less fault to break the laws of obedience in watching than in sleeping, in labouring than in doing nothing.

When F. Araos, whose spiritual labours were very successful in the court of Spain, seemed to seek the conversation of the great ones of the world upon pretence of conciliating their favour to his ministry, St Ignatius sent him a sharp reprimand, telling him that the necessary authority for the ministers of the word of God is to be gained only by a spirit of recollection and the exercises of Christian humility; for the loss of everything is to be feared in an intercourse with the great ones of the world. He used to say that prosperity caused in him more fear than joy; that when

persecution ceased he should be in apprehension lest the Society should somewhat relax in the observance of its regular discipline; that good fortune is never to be trusted and that we have most to fear when things go according to our desires.

Notwithstanding the fatigue and constant application which the establishment of his Order in all parts of the world and so many other great enterprises undertaken to promote the glory of God required, he was all on fire with an excess of charity and a restless desire of gaining souls to God, and wearied himself out in the service of his neighbour, always labouring to extirpate vice and to promote virtue in all, and set on foot several practices which might conduce to the divine service and the salvation of men. It is not to be believed how many and how great affairs this blessed man was able to go through, and with what courage and spirit he bore so continual a burden, and this with so weak health and infirm body. But he was assisted by the powerful hand of our Lord that furnished him with strength for all his labours; so that he then appeared strongest and most courageous when he was weary, sickly, and unprovided of human and natural helps; for, in his infirmity, the power of God manifested itself, and the saint seemed to support the weakness of his body with the vigour of his soul. This interior strength he chiefly maintained by an eminent spirit of prayer and the constant and closest union of his soul with God. For he was favoured with an extraordinary grace of devotion which he, out of humility, thought God had given him out of compassion for his weakness and misery, which he said was greater than that of any other. In saying the holy mass and reciting the divine office, the abundance of heavenly delights which God poured into his soul was often so great, and made such showers of tears stream from his eyes that he was obliged to stop in a manner at every word, sometimes to make a considerable interruption whilst he gave vent to his tears. It was once feared lest his continual effusion of tears should hurt his eyesight. At other times, though his eyes were dry at his devotion and the sluices of his tears were shut up, yet their influence and effect were not wanting; for his spirit was still watered with heavenly dew and the divine illustrations ceased not to flow copiously into his soul.

In matters of concern, though reasons were ever so convincing and evident, he never took any resolution before he had consulted God by prayer. He let not an hour pass in the day without recollecting himself interiorly, and examining his conscience for this purpose banishing for a while all other thoughts. He never applied his mind so much to exterior affairs as to lose the sweet relish of interior devotion. He had God always and in all things present to his mind. Every object served him for a book wherein he read the divine perfections, and by that means raised his heart to the Creator. He recommended this manner of prayer to everyone,

especially to those who are employed in spiritual functions for the help of their neighbour.

He prescribed to the priests of his Order to be about half an hour at the altar in saying mass, to avoid on one side the least appearance of indecent hurry and precipitation in that tremendous sacrifice; and on the other, not to be tedious to the people by unseasonably indulging their private devotion. Nevertheless, he was himself about an hour in saying mass, to excuse which he alleged the plea of necessity, being often obliged to make pauses through an irresistible tenderness of devotion. After mass he spent two hours in private prayer, during which time no one was admitted to speak to him except on some pressing necessity. F. Lewis Gonzales, who for some time governed the college under him, says, "As often as I went to him at that time, which necessity frequently obliged me to do, I always saw his face shining with an air so bright and heavenly that, quite forgetting myself, I stood astonished in contemplating him. Nor was his countenance like that of many devout men in whom I have admired a wonderful serenity at their prayers, but it breathed something quite unusual and, as it were, divine." On other occasions the like was remarked in him; on which account F. Lainez compared him to Moses when he came from conversing with God. Nicholas Lanoy testified that he one day saw a fire flame on his head whilst he was saying mass. St Philip Neri, who often visited St Ignatius, used to assure his friends that he had seen his face shining with bright rays of light, as F. Antony Galloni his disciple and confidant in all his concerns, and Marcellus Vitelleschi declared they had often heard from his own mouth; of which Cardinal Taurusius, Archbishop of Sienna, published an authentic certificate.<sup>1</sup> John Petronius, a famous physician in Rome, declared publicly that when sick he once saw his own chamber, which was then very dark, by reason of the windows being shut, filled with a dazzling light from such rays from the blessed man's coming into it. Isabel Rosella, John Pascal, and several other persons testified that they had sometimes beheld his countenance at prayer sparkling with radiant beams of light, the abundant consolations which replenished his soul redounding on his body. John Pascal added that he had seen him in prayer raised more than a foot above the ground and heard him say at the same time, "O my God! O my Lord! O that men knew thee!"

If the spirit of prayer was that virtue by which our saint was admitted to the familiar intercourse with God, was the key which unlocked to him the treasure of all other virtues and graces, and was the continual comfort, support, and light of his soul and the constant advancement of its supernatural life in his mortal pilgrimage, this spirit was itself founded in the most perfect self-denial. The Holy Ghost never communicates himself

<sup>1</sup> Extant in Bartoli, lib. iv. p. 372.



by the infusion of this grace, but to a heart that is entirely dead to itself and its passions and crucified to the world. This St Ignatius understood so well, that hearing another once say that a certain person was endowed with a great gift of contemplation and was eminently a man of prayer, he corrected the expression, saying, "Call him rather a man of the most perfect self-denial"; because the spirit of grace and prayer requires a perfect purity and disengagement from all inordinate affections and a heart empty of itself. This victory over himself the saint obtained by an habitual practice of the exterior mortification of his senses; and by that perfect patience, resignation, and confidence in God, and constancy with which he bore the most severe interior and exterior trials. To complete the most essential interior mortification of his will and passions, he added the practice of an unlimited obedience to his directors and superiors, and of the most profound and sincere humility. Even when broken with age and infirmities, he said that should his holiness command it he would with joy go on board the first ship he could find; and if he were so ordered, though it had neither sails nor rudder and without any warning, would immediately set out for any part of the globe. It was his perpetual lesson to his novices—"Sacrifice your will and judgment by obedience. Whatever you do without the consent of your spiritual guide will be imputed to wilfulness, not to virtue, though you were to exhaust your bodies by labours or austerities."

Humility is the sister virtue of obedience, the foundation of a spiritual life and the distinguishing mark or characteristic of all the saints. This virtue St Ignatius embraced with the utmost ardour, from his first entering upon a spiritual course of life. He went a long time in old tattered rags and lived in hospitals, despised, affronted, and persecuted; this he desired, and in it he found his great joy and satisfaction. He ever retained this affection for humiliations out of a sincere contempt of himself; for, acknowledging himself a sinner, he was thoroughly persuaded that contempt and injuries from all creatures, as instruments of the divine justice, were his due, and that he was most unworthy of all comforts, favour, or regard. Nothing but charity and zeal to procure his neighbour's good restrained him from doing ridiculous things on purpose to be laughed at by all; and he always practised such humiliations as were consistent with prudence and his other duties. All his actions, and whatever belonged to him, breathed an air of sincere humility. His apparel was poor, though clean; his bed was very mean and his diet coarse, and so temperate that it was a perpetual abstinence. He employed himself often most cheerfully in the meanest offices about the house, as in making beds and in cleansing the chambers of the sick. Though he was superior, he frequently submitted to inferiors with wonderful meekness and humility, when he could do it without prejudice to his authority. In things of which he was not certain he readily acquiesced in the judgment of others; and was a great enemy

to all positiveness and to the use of superlatives in discourse. He received rebukes from anyone with cheerfulness and thanks. If in his presence anything was said that redounded to his praise, he showed an extreme confusion which was usually accompanied with many tears. He was seldom heard to speak of himself, and never but on very pressing occasions. Though visions, revelations, and the like favours were frequently vouchsafed him, he scarce ever mentioned such things; but all his discourse was of humility, charity, patience, divine zeal, prayer, mortification, and other such virtues of which we are to make the greatest account, and by which alone men become saints and friends of God. Ribadeneira heard him say that everyone in the house was to him an example of virtue, and that he was not scandalized at anyone besides himself.

It was his usual saying that he did not think there was a man in the world that on one side received from God so great and continual favours, and yet on the other side was so ungrateful and so slothful in his service as himself. It was his desire that after his death his body might be thrown upon some dunghill, in punishment of the sins he had committed by pampering it. The chief reasons why he would have his Order called the "Society of Jesus," were lest his name should be given it and that his followers might be known by their love and zeal for their Redeemer. As often as he spoke of his Order, he called it "This least Society"; for he would have his children to look upon themselves as the last and least of all persons in the church.

He had often in his mouth these words, which he took for his motto or device, "To the greater glory of God," referring to this end with all his strength, himself, his Society, and all his actions, in which he always chose that which appeared to him the most perfect. He often said to God, "Lord, what do I desire, or what can I desire besides thee!" True love is never idle; and always to labour to promote God's honour, or to suffer for his sake, was this saint's greatest pleasure. He said that no created thing can bring to a soul such solid joy and comfort as to suffer for Christ. Being asked what was the most certain and the shortest way to perfection, he answered, "To endure for the love of Christ many and grievous afflictions. Ask this grace of our Lord: on whomsoever he bestoweth it, he does him many other signal favours that always attend this grace." Out of this burning love of God he most ardently desired the separation of his soul from his mortal body when it should be God's will, and when he thought of death he could not refrain from tears of joy, because he should then see his loving Redeemer; and beholding God face to face, should love and praise him eternally without let, abatement, or intermission.

From this same love of God sprang his ardent thirst for the salvation of men, for which he undertook so many and so great things, and to which

he devoted his watchings, prayers, tears, and labours. When he dismissed any missionaries to preach the word of God, he usually said to them, "Go, brethren, inflame the world, spread about that fire which Jesus Christ came to kindle on earth." To gain others to Christ he, with admirable address, made himself all to all, going in at *their* door and coming out at *his own*. He received sincere penitents with the greatest sweetness and condescension so as often to take upon himself part of their penance. When a brother, growing weary of the yoke of Christ, had determined to leave the Society, St Ignatius by his remonstrances made such an impression upon his heart that, falling at the feet of the general, he offered to undergo whatever punishment he would impose upon him. To which the saint replied, "One part of your penance shall be that you never repent more of having served God. For the other part, I take it upon myself and will discharge it for you." He endeavoured to bring all his penitents to make, without reserve, the perfect sacrifice of themselves to God, telling them that it is not to be expressed what precious treasures God reserves for, and with what effusion he communicates himself to, those who give themselves to him with their whole heart. He proposed to them for their model this prayer which he used often to recite: "Receive O Lord, all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my whole will. You have given me all that I have, all that I possess, and I surrender all to your divine will that you dispose of me. Give me only your love and your grace. With this I am rich enough, and I have no more to ask."

St Ignatius was general of the Society fifteen years, three months, and nine days; but was in the end so worn out with infirmities that he procured that the Society should choose him an assistant in that office. This was F. Jerom Nadal. After which the saint reserved to himself only the care of the sick, and spent his time in continual prayer and in preparing himself for death.

By way of his last will and testament he dictated certain holy maxims concerning the obligation and conditions of religious obedience, which he bequeathed to his brethren of the Society. The saint, on the day before he died, charged F. Polancus to beg his holiness's blessing for him at the article of death, though others at that time did not think it so near. The next morning having lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven and pronouncing both with his tongue and heart the sweet name of Jesus with a serene countenance, he calmly gave up his happy soul into the hands of his Creator on the last day of July, in the year 1556, the sixty-fifth of his age, the thirty-fifth after his conversion and the sixteenth after the confirmation of the Society. The people esteemed him a saint both living and after his death; and the opinion of his sanctity was confirmed by many miracles. He saw his Society in very few years divided into twelve provinces, with above one hundred colleges and spread over almost the

whole world. In 1626 it contained thirty-six provinces, and in them eight hundred houses, and fifteen thousand Jesuits, since which time it is much increased. St Ignatius's body was buried first in the little church of the Jesuits, dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin in Rome. When Cardinal Alexander Farnesius had built the stately church of the professed house called Il Gesu, it was translated thither in 1587; and in 1637 was laid under the altar of the chapel which bears his name. This church is one of the most magnificent piles of building in the world, next to the Vatican, and is not less admired for the elegance of the architecture than for its riches, consisting in costly beautiful ornaments of gold, silver, jewels, exquisite paintings, statues, and carving, and a great profusion of fine marble. Among the many chapels which it contains those of the Blessed Virgin, of the Angels, of SS. Abundius and Abundantius, martyrs, of St Francis Borgia, and of St Ignatius, are the admiration of travellers, especially the last, in which the remains of the holy founder lie in a rich silver shrine under the altar exposed to view. The other glittering rich ornaments of this place seem almost to lose their lustre when the statue of the saint is uncovered. It is somewhat bigger than the life, because raised high. Its bright shining gold, silver, and sparkling diamonds, especially in the crown of glory over the head, dazzle the eye. In the professed house are shown the pictures of St Ignatius and St Philip Neri taken from the life. St Ignatius's chamber is now a chapel, his study is another in which prelates and sometimes popes come to say mass on the saint's festival. He was beatified by Paul V in 1609, and canonized by Gregory XV in 1622, though the bull was only published the year following by Urban VIII.

*The following feasts are celebrated on July 31 :*

BLESSED EVERARD HANSE, martyr : ST HELEN OF SKOFDE, in Sweden, converted by St Sigfrid and honoured with equal devotion in Sweden and Denmark : BLESSED JOAN ANTIDEA THOURET : ST JOHN COLUMBINI, founder of the Order of the JESUATI, the first magistrate of Sienna ; weaned from the world by reading the life of St Mary of Egypt, he devoted himself to apostolic poverty serving the poor in hospitals and died happily in 1367, twelve years after his conversion : and ST IGNATIUS LOYOLA, founder of the Society of Jesus ; he had always a singular devotion to St Peter. Author of the Spiritual Exercises which have guided many in the spiritual life.

## AUGUST 1

### ST PETER AD VINCULA, OR ST PETER'S CHAINS

[From Acts xii. ; Tillemont, t. i. pp. 185, 536 ; Orsi, lib. i. n. 37, p. 58. See Jos. Assem. in Cal. Univ. ad 16 Jan. t. vi. p. 84, and Monsacratì, Diss. de Catenis. St Petri ad Bend. XIV, 1750.]

THE chains and prisons of the saints were the subject of their greatest joy and glory, and the source of the highest graces and crowns. God honoured them in the prince of the apostles with wonderful miracles. It has been related in the life of St James the Great that Herod Agrippa, King of the Jews, having put to death that apostle in the year 44 in order to gain the affection and applause of his people by an action still more agreeable to them caused St Peter, the prince of the sacred college, to be cast into prison. It was his intention to put him publicly to death after Easter. The whole church at Jerusalem put up its prayers and cries to God, without ceasing, for the deliverance of the chief pastor of his whole flock and God favourably heard them. The king took all precautions possible to prevent the escape of his prisoner as he and the other apostles had formerly been miraculously delivered out of prison by an angel.<sup>1</sup> St Peter himself remained, no doubt, in perfect joy, committing himself with entire confidence and submission to the divine disposal. In this tranquillity of mind and entire resignation of himself, he lay fast asleep on the very night before the day intended for his execution when it pleased God to deliver him out of the hands of his enemies. He was guarded by sixteen soldiers, four of whom always kept sentry in their turns; two in the same dungeon with him, and two at the gate. He was fastened to the ground by two chains and slept between the two soldiers. In the middle of the night a bright light shone in the prison and an angel appeared near him, and striking him on the side awaked him out of his sleep and bade him instantly arise, gird his coat about him, put on his sandals and his cloak, and follow him. The apostle did so, for the chains had dropped off from his hands. Following his guide he passed after him through the first and second ward or watch, and through the iron gate which led into the city which opened to them of its own accord. The angel conducted him through one street; then, suddenly disappearing, left him to seek some asylum. Till then the apostle, in his surprise, doubted whether the whole was not a mere vision; but upon the angel's vanishing he acknowledged his miraculous deliverance and blessed the author of it. He went directly to the house of Mary

<sup>1</sup> Acts v. 19.

the mother of John, surnamed Mark, where several disciples were met together and were sending up their prayers to heaven for his deliverance. As he stood knocking without, a young woman going to the door and perceiving it was his voice, ran in and acquainted the company that Peter was at the door; and when she persisted in the thing they concluded rather it must be his guardian angel sent by God upon some extraordinary account: until, being let in, he related to them the whole manner of his miraculous escape; and having enjoined them to give notice thereof to St James and the rest of the brethren, he withdrew to a place of more retirement and security, carrying wherever he went the heavenly blessing and life. The next day, when he was not to be found, Agrippa commanded the keepers to be put to death, as supposing them accessory to St Peter's escape. This wonderful deliverance is a proof that though God does sometimes allow the wicked to execute their designs, yet when it pleases him he restrains them and sets bounds to their wickedness, and that he always watches over his faithful servants. We likewise see, by this event, the power and efficacy of public prayer. The Jewish passover that year fell on the 1st of April; but the Greek Menæa commemorates this miracle and St Peter's Chain on the 16th of January, in memory of the dedication of a church called St Peter's Chain, in which one of his chains was kept. The Western church has long kept this festival on the 1st of August, on account of a dedication made on this day of the famous old church of this title in Rome which has been a place of great devotion. It gives a title to a cardinal. Mention is made of priests of this church in the fifth century.

Such was the veneration of the faithful for the relics of the apostles SS. Peter and Paul, deposited at Rome, that the popes themselves durst not presume to touch, separate, or give away part of the precious remains of their bodies. This St Gregory the Great often testifies in his epistles.<sup>1</sup> Pope Hormisdas assures us of the same in his letter to Justinian, nephew to the Emperor Justin I and afterwards his successor, who had begged a small particle of them for a church he was building to their honour at Constantinople.<sup>2</sup> Both these popes testify that it was the custom for the popes only to put down a linen cloth, called Brandeum, upon the tomb of the apostles, which being blessed was sent and received with the respect due to a relic; and God often worked miracles by these Brandeums. Justinian was satisfied with such a relic, and with the reasons of respect for the sacred bodies alleged by the pope. His ambassadors at the same time begged and obtained a small portion of St Peter's Chains, which were kept at Rome with great devotion in the ancient church which is known by that title, at least ever since the fifth century. The popes were accustomed to send the filings of these chains as precious relics to devout princes, and they were often instruments of miracles. The pope himself

<sup>1</sup> See Greg. M. lib. iii. Ep. 30, p. 567, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Conc. t. iv. p. 1515.

rasped off these filings, which he enclosed in a cross or in a golden key, as appears from St Gregory,<sup>1</sup> who says in his letter to King Childebert,<sup>2</sup> to whom he sent one of these keys, that many persons out of devotion hung such keys about their necks as preservatives from dangers. St Cæsarius says<sup>3</sup> that the chains with which this apostle was bound in his last imprisonment before his martyrdom, were preserved by the faithful and honoured at Rome in his time. Arator, subdeacon of the church of Rome, who composed a poem on the Acts of the Apostles in the reign of Justinian, says that Rome was also enriched with one of the chains with which that apostle was bound by Agrippa at Jerusalem, and from which the angel delivered him. St Chrysostom affirms the same, and expresses the most earnest desire to have been able to go so far to see and kiss that relic of this great apostle's glorious sufferings.<sup>4</sup> It is said that Eudocia, the wife of Theodosius the Younger, in 439, brought from Jerusalem two chains with which St Peter had been bound in that city, and having given one to a church in Constantinople, sent the other to Rome to her daughter Eudoxia, who was married to Valentinian III, and who is said to have built a church on the Esquiline hill, in which it was deposited.<sup>5</sup>

The iron chains of this apostle have been esteemed as more precious and valuable than gold, says St Cæsarius.<sup>6</sup> Pagan Rome never derived so much honour from the spoils and trophies of a conquered world as Christian Rome receives from the corporeal remains of these two glorious apostles, before which the greatest emperors lay down their diadems and prostrate themselves, as St Chrysostom and St Austin<sup>7</sup> observe. Among other proofs of the veneration of the primitive Christians towards those sacred pledges, Orsi<sup>8</sup> appeals to the images of SS. Peter and Paul, which are found frequently carved in the ancient cemeteries of Rome and on many sepulchral urns, which many antiquaries have shown to be more ancient than the persecution of Diocletian. Eusebius<sup>9</sup> tells us that he had seen the pictures of these two apostles which had been preserved down to his time. That of St Paul agrees with the description given of him in the dialogue entitled Philopatris, wrote about the end of the first century before Lucian, who was born under Trajan and flourished under Marcus Aurelius. It also agrees with that extant in the very ancient though apocryphal acts of St Thecla.

The first day of August is called by us Lammas-day, softened from Loaf-mas; a mass of thanksgiving for the first fruits of the earth, or of the corn, being anciently celebrated in England on this day.<sup>10</sup> It was kept with a solemn procession and was also called the Guild of August. The solemn blessing of new grapes was performed both among the Greeks and

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iii. Ep. 30; lib. v. Ep. 6; lib. xi. Ep. 49; lib. vi. Ep. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. v. Ep. 650.

<sup>3</sup> Serm. 203, in Append. Op. St Aug. n. 5.

<sup>4</sup> St Chrys. Hom. 8, in Ephes.

<sup>5</sup> See Baron. ad ann. 439.

<sup>6</sup> Loco cit.

<sup>7</sup> St Aug. Ep. 232, alias 42 ad Madaur.

<sup>8</sup> Orsi, lib. ii. n. 24, p. 265.

<sup>9</sup> Eus. lib. vii. hist. c. 18.

<sup>10</sup> See Hearne on Rob. of Gloc. t. ii. p. 679.

Latins in some places on the 1st, in others on the 6th day of August, and is expressly mentioned in ancient liturgical books, as Cardinal Bona and others take notice.

We owe to God, in a special manner, the first fruits of our lives and of all our actions, in acknowledgment that he is our beginning and last end. Of this tribute he is extremely jealous, as he expressed in the old law by his rigorous precept of the sacrifice of first fruits. A Christian, to acquit himself of this duty, ought to begin every day and every undertaking, by fervently renewing the consecration of himself and of all his actions to God, with an humble sacrifice of thanksgiving for his benefits and an earnest petition of the divine blessing and grace to make a good use of the gifts of heaven.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 1 :*

ST PETER AD VINCULA or St Peter's Chains : THE FEAST OF LAMMAS, or of the First Fruits of the Corn : ST ETHELWOLF, Bishop of Winchester, where he was born. He prayed earnestly that he might find an experienced spiritual guide and found him in St Dunstan, then Abbot of Glastonbury : SAINTS FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY, virgins and martyrs, three holy sisters who suffered death under Adrian in Rome : THE SEVEN MACCHABEAN BROTHERS with their mother, holy Jewish martyrs under the impious King of Syria : BLESSED PETER JULIAN EYMARD : and ST PELLEGRINI or PEREGRINUS, a young Irish prince who, after visiting the Holy Land, led an austere life as a hermit in the mountains of Italy.

## AUGUST 2

### ST STEPHEN, POPE AND MARTYR

(A.D. 257)

[See the Pontificals, and the works of St Cyprian, &c. Also Tillemont, t. xi.; Orsi, t. iii. b. vii.]

ST STEPHEN was by birth a Roman, and being promoted to holy orders was made archdeacon of that church under the holy popes and martyrs, St Cornelius and St Lucius. The latter, going to martyrdom, recommended him to his clergy for his successor. He was, accordingly, chosen pope on the 3rd of May 253, and sat four years, two months, and twenty-one days. Soon after his election he was called to put a stop to the havoc which certain wolves, under the name and habit of pastors, threatened to make in the churches of Gaul and Spain. Marcian, Bishop of Arles (in which see he seems to have succeeded St Regulus, immediate successor of St Trophimus), embraced the error of Novatian, and, upon the inhuman maxim of that murderer of souls, refused the communion, that is absolution, to many penitents, even in the articles of death. Faustinus, Bishop of Lyons, and other Gaulish prelates, sent informations and complaints against him to St Stephen and St Cyprian: to the first, on account of the superior authority and jurisdiction of his see; to the other, on account of the great reputation of his sanctity, eloquence, and remarkable zeal against the Novatians. St Cyprian, having no jurisdiction over Arles, could do no more than join the Gaulish Catholics in stirring up the zeal of St



Stephen to exert his authority, and not suffer an obstinate heretic to disturb the peace of those churches to the destruction of souls. This he did by a letter to St Stephen, in which he says,<sup>1</sup> "It is necessary that you dispatch away ample letters to our fellow-bishops in Gaul, that they no longer suffer the obstinate Marcian to insult our college. Write to that province, and to the people of Arles, that Marcian being excommunicated, a successor may be provided for his see. Acquaint us, if you please, who is made bishop of Arles in the room of Marcian, that we may know to whom we are to send letters of communion, and to direct our brethren." Though the letters of St Stephen on this head have not reached us, we cannot doubt but by his order everything here mentioned was carried into execution; for, in the ancient list of the bishops of Arles, published by Mabillon, the name of Marcian does not occur.

An affair of no less consequence happened in Spain. Basilides, Bishop of Merida, and Martialis, Bishop of Leon and Astorga, had fallen into the crime of the Libellatici, that is, to save their lives in the persecution, had purchased for money libels of safety from the persecutors, as if they had sacrificed to idols. For this and other notorious crimes, Martialis was deposed in a synod, and Basilides was so intimidated, that he voluntarily resigned his see. Sabinus was placed in that of Basilides, and Felix in that of Martialis. Basilides soon after repented of what he had done, went to Rome, and imposing upon St Stephen, was admitted by him to communion as a colleague in the episcopal order; which was the more easy as no sentence of deposition had passed in his case. Returning into Spain with letters of the pope in his favour, he was received in the same rank by some of the bishops; and Martialis, encouraged by his example, presumed to claim the same privilege. The Spanish bishops consulted St Cyprian what they ought to do with regard to the two delinquents, and that learned prelate answered, that persons notoriously guilty of such crimes were, by the canons, utterly disqualified for presiding in the church of Christ, and offering sacrifices to God; that the election and ordination of their two successors having been regular and valid, they could not be rescinded or made null; and lastly, that the pope's letters were obrepetitious, and obtained by fraud and a suppression of the truth, consequently were null. "Basilides," says he, "going to Rome, there imposed upon our colleague Stephen, living at a distance and ignorant of the truth that was concealed from him. All this only tends to accumulate the crimes of Basilides, rather than to abolish the remembrance of them; since, to his former account, hereby is added the guilt of endeavouring to circumvent the pastors of the church."<sup>2</sup> He lays the blame, not on him who had

<sup>1</sup> St Cypr. Ep. 67; Pam. 68; Fello. See Ganpred's *Histoire de Provence*; Gallia Christ. Nov. t. i. p. 552; Hist. Littér. de la France, t. i. p. 306; Longueval, Hist. de l'Egl. Gallicane; Dupin de Antiqu. Eccl. Discipl.

<sup>2</sup> St Cypr. Ep. 68; Pam. 67; Fello. See Cenni, Antiqu. Eccl. Hisp. and Dupin, de Antiqu. Eccl. Discipl.

been imposed upon, but Basilides, who fraudulently gained "access to him." We know no more of this affair; but cannot doubt that the pope (whose jurisdiction none of the parties disclaimed) was better informed, and the proceedings of the Spanish bishops confirmed.

The controversy concerning the rebaptization of heretics gave St Stephen much more trouble. It was the constant doctrine of the Catholic church that baptism given in the evangelical words, that is, in the name of the three persons of the Holy Trinity, is valid, though it be conferred by an heretic. This was the practice even of the African church till Agrippinus, Bishop of Carthage, in the close of the second century changed it, fifty years before St Cyprian, as St Austin and Vincent of Lerins testify; and St Cyprian himself only appeals to a council held by Agrippinus for the origin of his pretended tradition.<sup>1</sup> St Cyprian, in three African councils, decreed, according to this principle, that baptism given by an heretic is always null and invalid; which decision he founds in this false principle, that no one can receive the Holy Ghost by the hands of one who does not himself possess him in his soul. Which false reasoning would equally prove that no one in mortal sin can validly administer any sacrament; but Christ is the principal, though invisible, minister in the administration of the sacraments; and though both faith and the state of grace be required in him who confers any sacrament, not to incur the guilt of sacrilege; yet neither is required for the validity. St Cyprian sums up all the arguments which he thought might serve his purpose in his letter to Jubaianus, written in 256. Many bishops of Cilicia, Cappadocia, and Phrygia, having at their head Firmilian, the learned Bishop of Cæsarea, and Helenus of Tarsus, fell in with the Africans and maintained the same error. All the partizans of this practice falsely imagined it to be a point, not of faith which is everywhere invariable, but of mere discipline, in which every church might be allowed to follow its own rule or law. St Cyprian and Firmilian carried on the dispute with too great warmth, the latter especially, who spoke of St Stephen in an unbecoming manner. If such great and holy men could be betrayed into anger and biassed by prepossession, how much ought we sinners to watch over our hearts against passion and mistrust our own judgment! The respect which is due to their name and virtue obliges us to draw a veil over this fault, as St Austin often puts us in mind, who, speaking of Firmilian, says: "I will not touch upon what he let fall in his anger against Stephen." The pope, who saw the danger which threatened the church under the colour of zeal for its purity and unity, and an aversion from heresy, opposed himself as a rampart for the house of God, declaring that no innovation is to be allowed, but that the tradition of the church, derived from the apostles, is to be inviolably maintained. He even threatened to cut off the patrons of the novelty

<sup>1</sup> St Cypr. Ep. 73, ad Jubaian. n. 3.

from the communion of the church. But St Dionysius of Alexandria interceded by letters and procured a respite, as Eusebius mentions.<sup>1</sup>

"Stephen," says St Austin,<sup>2</sup> "thought of excommunicating them; but being endued with the bowels of holy charity, he judged it better to abide in union. The peace of Christ overcame in their hearts." Of this contest, the judicious Vincent of Lerins<sup>3</sup> gives the following account: "When all cried out against the novelty, and the priests everywhere opposed it in proportion to everyone's zeal, then Pope Stephen of blessed memory, Bishop of the Apostolic See, stood up with his other colleagues against it; but he, in a signal manner above the rest, thinking it fitting, I believe, that he should go beyond them as much by the ardour of his faith as he was raised above them by the authority of his see. In his letter to the church of Africa, he thus decrees: "Let no innovation be introduced, but let that be observed which is handed down to us by tradition." The prudent and holy man understood that the rule of piety admits nothing new, but that all things are to be delivered down to our posterity with the same fidelity with which they were received, and that it is our duty to follow religion and not make religion follow us; for the proper characteristic of a modest and sober Christian is, not to impose his own conceits upon posterity, but to make his own imaginations bend to the wisdom of those that went before him. What then was the issue of this grand affair, but that which is usual?—antiquity kept possession and novelty was exploded."

St Stephen died on the 2nd of August 257, and was buried in the cemetery of Calixtus. He is styled a martyr in the Sacramentary of St Gregory the Great, and in the ancient Martyrologies which bear the name of St Jerom. The persecution of Valerian was raised in the year 257, and in it St Stephen could not fail to be sought out as the principal victim. The acts of his martyrdom deserve some regard, as Tillemont observes. They are esteemed genuine by Baronius and Berti.<sup>4</sup> This latter shows the exceptions made to their authority by Basnage to be altogether founded in mistakes. These acts relate that the saint was beheaded by the pursuivants whilst he was sitting in his pontifical chair, which was buried with his body, and is still shown as stained with his blood. The relics were translated to Pisa in 1682, and are there venerated in the great church which bears his name. But his head is kept with great respect at Cologne.

Not only bishops, but all superiors are Christ's viceregents, and are bound to be mindful of their charge, for which they will be demanded a rigorous account. How many such live as if they had only their own souls to take care of; yet think themselves good Christians? Few have the

<sup>1</sup> Hist. lib. vii. c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. v. de Bapt. c. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Common. c. 9. See Ant. Sandini's Diss. 7, ad Histor. Pontif. Rom. p. 61; Alex. Herdt's *Discordia concors inter Steph. et Cypr.*

<sup>4</sup> Laur. Berti, Diss. Hist. t. ii. p. 170.

light, the courage, the charity, and the zeal necessary for such a charge; and many, through sloth, self-love, or a passion for pleasure, company, vanity, and the world, neglect various obligations of their state. It will be a false plea for such to allege at the last day that they have kept well their own vineyard, whilst they have suffered others under their care to be overgrown with briars and weeds.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 2 :*

ST ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI, C.S.S.R., Doctor of the Church, who wrote many works on moral and ascetical theology : ST ETHELDRITHA or ALFRIDA, a daughter of Offa, a king of the Mercians. She lived in a small cell near Croyland in Lincolnshire for forty years : ST STEPHEN, Pope and martyr, a Roman by birth.

### AUGUST 3

## THE FINDING OF ST STEPHEN, OR THE DISCOVERY OF HIS RELICS

[From the authentic relation of Lucian, and from St Austin, Evodius, &c. See Tillemont, t. ii. p. 9 ; Orsi, lib. xxv. n. 118, t. xi. p. 218 ; Fleury, lib. xxiii. n. 22, t. v. p. 425.]

THIS second festival, in honour of the holy protomartyr St Stephen, was instituted by the church on the occasion of the discovery of his precious remains. His body lay long concealed, whilst the glory of his sanctity shone both in heaven and on earth. The very remembrance of the place of his burial had been blotted out of the minds of men, and his relics lay covered under the ruins of an old tomb in a place twenty miles from Jerusalem, called Caphargamala, that is, borough of Gamaliel, where stood a church which was served by a venerable priest named Lucian. In the year 415, in the tenth consulship of Honorius, and the sixth of Theodosius the Younger, on Friday the 3rd of December, about nine o'clock at night, Lucian was sleeping in his bed in the baptistery, where he commonly lay, in order to guard the sacred vessels of the church. Being half awake, he saw a tall, comely old man of a venerable aspect, with a long white beard, clothed in a white garment, edged with small plates of gold marked with crosses, and holding a golden wand in his hand. This person approached Lucian, and calling him thrice by his name, bid him go to Jerusalem and tell Bishop John to come and open the tombs in which his remains and those of certain other servants of Christ lay, that through their means God might open to many the gates of his clemency. Lucian asked his name. "I am," said he, "Gamaliel, who instructed Paul the apostle in the law; and on the east side of the monument lieth Stephen, who was stoned by the Jews, without the north gate. His body was left there exposed one day and one night, but was not touched by birds or beasts. I exhorted the faithful to carry it off in the night-time, which, when they had done, I caused it to be carried secretly to my house in the country where I celebrated his funeral rites forty days. and then caused his body to be laid

in my own tomb to the eastward. Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, lieth there in another coffin. He was excommunicated by the Jews for following Christ and banished out of Jerusalem. Whereupon I received him into my house in the country, and there maintained him to the end of his life; after his death I buried him honourably near Stephen. I likewise buried there my son, Abibas, who died before me at the age of twenty years. His body is in the third coffin, which stands higher up, where I myself was also interred after my death. My wife Ethna and my eldest son Semelias, who were not willing to embrace the faith of Christ, were buried in another ground, called Capharsemalia." Lucian, fearing to pass for an impostor if he was too credulous, prayed that if the vision was from God he might be favoured with it a second and a third time; and he continued to fast on bread and water. On the Friday following Gamaliel appeared again to him, in the same form as before, and commanded him to obey. As emblems of the relics he brought and showed Lucian four baskets, three of gold and one of silver. The golden baskets were full of roses, two of white and one of red roses; the silver basket was full of saffron of a most delicious smell. Lucian asked what these were. Gamaliel said, "They are our relics. The red roses represent Stephen, who lieth at the entrance of the sepulchre; the second basket Nicodemus, who is near the door; the silver basket represents my son Abibas, who departed this life without stain; his basket is contiguous to mine." Having said this he disappeared. Lucian then awaked, gave thanks to God, and continued his fasts. In the third week, on the same day and at the same hour, Gamaliel appeared again to him, and with threats upbraided him with his neglect, adding that the drought which then afflicted the world would be removed only by his obedience and the discovery of their relics. Lucian being now terrified, promised he would no longer defer it.

After this last vision, he repaired to Jerusalem and laid the whole affair before Bishop John, who wept for joy, and bid him go and search for the relics which the bishop concluded would be found under a heap of small stones, which lay in a field near his church. Lucian said he imagined the same thing and returning to his borough summoned the inhabitants to meet the next day in the morning, in order to search under the heap of stones. As Lucian was going the morning following to see the place dug up, he was met by Migetius, a monk of a pure and holy life, who told him that Gamaliel had appeared to him and bade him inform Lucian that they laboured in vain in that place. "We were laid there," said he, "at the time of our funeral obsequies, according to the ancient custom; and that heap of stones was a mark of the mourning of our friends. Search elsewhere, in a place called Debatalia. In effect," said Migetius, continuing the relation of his vision, "I found myself of a sudden in the same field where I saw a neglected ruinous tomb, and in it three beds adorned with

gold; in one of them, more elevated than the others, lay two men, an old man and a young one, and one in each of the other beds." Lucian having heard Migetius's report, praised God for having another witness of his revelation, and having removed, to no purpose, the heap of stones, went to the other place. In digging up the earth here three coffins or chests were found, as above-mentioned, whereon were engraved these words in very large characters: "Cheliel, Nasuam, Gamaliel, Abibas." The two first are the Syriac names of Stephen, or "crowned," and Nicodemus, or "victory of the people." Lucian sent immediately to acquaint Bishop John with this. He was then at the council of Diospolis, and taking along with him Eutonius, Bishop of Sebaste, and Eleutherius, Bishop of Jericho, came to the place. Upon the opening of St Stephen's coffin the earth shook, and there came out of the coffin such an agreeable odour that no one remembered to have ever smelt anything like it. There was a vast multitude of people assembled in that place, among whom were many persons afflicted with divers distempers; of whom seventy-three recovered their health upon the spot. Some were freed from evil spirits, others cured of scrophulous tumours of various kinds; others of fevers, fistulas, the bloody flux, the falling-sickness, headaches, and pains in the bowels. They kissed the holy relics and then shut them up. The bishop claimed those of St Stephen for the church of Jerusalem, of which he had been deacon; the rest were left at Caphargamala. The protomartyr's body was reduced to dust, excepting the bones, which were whole and in their natural situation. The bishop consented to leave a small portion of them at Caphargamala; the rest were carried in the coffin, with singing of psalms and hymns, to the church of Sion at Jerusalem. At the time of this translation there fell a great deal of rain, which refreshed the country after a long drought. The translation was performed on the 26th of December, on which day the church hath ever since honoured the memory of St Stephen, commemorating the discovery of his relics on the 3rd of August, probably on account of the dedication of some church in honour of St Stephen, perhaps that of Ancona. The history of this miraculous discovery and translation, written by Lucian himself, and translated into Latin by Avitus, a Spanish priest (native of Braga, then living at Jerusalem, an intimate friend of St Jerom), is published by the Benedictin monks in the appendix to the seventh tome of the works of St Austin. This account is also attested by Chrysippus, an eminent and holy priest of the church of Jerusalem (whose virtue is highly commended by the judicious author of the life of St Euthymius); by Idatius and Marcellinus, in their chronicles; by Basil, Bishop of Seleucia, St Austin,<sup>1</sup> Bede, &c. It is mentioned by most of the historians, and in the sermons of the principal fathers of that age. St Stephen's body remained in the church of Sion till the Empress Eudocia,

<sup>1</sup> Tr. 120, in Joan. Serm. 319, &c.

wife of Theodosius the younger, going a second time to Jerusalem, in 444, built a stately church to God in his honour, about a furlong from the city, near the spot where he was stoned to death, into which she procured his body to be translated, and in which she was buried herself after her death in 461. St Austin,<sup>1</sup> speaking of the miracles of St Stephen, addresses himself to his flock as follows: "Let us so desire to obtain temporal blessings by his intercession, that we may merit in imitating him, those which are eternal."

Our corporal necessities were not the motive which drew our omnipotent Physician down from heaven, but the spiritual miseries of our souls. In his mortal life he restored many sick to their health, and delivered demoniacs to give men a sensible proof of his divine power, and for an emblem that he came to relieve the spiritual miseries of our souls and to put an end to the empire of the devil over them. In like manner, when through his servants he has bestowed corporal blessings on men, he excites our confidence in his mercy to ask through their intercession his invisible graces. We ought to pray for our daily bread, or all necessary supplies of our bodily necessities; but should make these petitions subordinate to the great end of our sanctification, and his divine honour, offering them under this condition, as we know not in temporal blessings what is most expedient for us. God offers us his grace, his love, himself; him we must make the great and ultimate end of all our requests to him. If some rich prince should engage himself to grant us whatever we should ask, it would be putting an affront upon him if we confined our petition to pins or such trifles, as St Teresa remarks.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 3 :*

ST GAMALIEL, of the sect of the Pharisees, a doctor of the law. St Chrysostom says his conversion was earlier than that of St Paul : THE FINDING OF ST STEPHEN'S RELICS : ST NICODEMUS, a senator of Jerusalem who believed in Our Lord : and St WALTHER, Abbot of Melrose.

## AUGUST 4

### ST DOMINIC, CONFESSOR, FOUNDER OF THE FRIAR PREACHERS

(A.D. 1221)

[From the Chronicle of the Origin of this Order, compiled by B. Jordan of Saxony ; also from the five lives of this saint, all written by contemporary grave authors, namely, F. Theodoric of Apolda ; Constantine, Bishop of Orvieto ; Bartholomew, Bishop of Trent, F. Humbert, and Nicholas Trevet. See his life by F. Tournon ; likewise F. James Echard, the learned French Dominican, *De Script. Ord. St Dominici*, t. i. ; Mamachi, &c.]

ST DOMINIC was born in 1170, at Calaruega, anciently called Calaroga, in Old Castile in the diocese of Osma. He was of the illustrious house of the Guzmans, which has been frequently ennobled by alliances with divers

<sup>1</sup> Serm. 317.

royal families, and which still flourishes divided into several branches, of which some are grandees of the first class, as the Duke of Medina-Sidonia and of Medina de las Torres; the Marquisses of Azdales, of Monte Alegre, &c., the Counts of Niebla, of Olivares, &c. The Duke of Medina-Sidonia, who is chief of this noble house, is acknowledged patron of the whole Order of St Dominic. This honourable pedigree of our saint has been demonstrated by Echard,<sup>1</sup> Tournon,<sup>2</sup> and Bremond,<sup>3</sup> from the archives of Bologna, drawn up in the saint's lifetime, and from other undoubted monuments of the same age in which he lived, though a Christian derives his true nobility from his spiritual regeneration and grace, and it is the chief glory of the saints that they despised all worldly advantages for Christ. St Dominic's father was called Felix of Guzman, and his mother was Jane of Asa, which family continues still in a flourishing condition in Spain. Their eldest son Antony was a priest, and devoted himself to the service of the poor in an hospital, in which employment he died in the odour of sanctity. Mames, the second, embraced our saint's order, and followed him in his missions. Dominic was the third, and had younger brothers. His mother, whilst she was with child of him, dreamed that she brought forth a whelp which carried in its mouth a burning torch, with which it set the whole world on fire. After his birth it was her first care to procure him speedily the grace of baptism, in which sacrament he received the name of Dominic, in honour of a holy abbot called Dominic of Silos. By her early instructions he was taught happily to turn the first dawning of his reason towards his Creator. Such was his fervour in his childhood that he accustomed himself to rise often in the night to pray and, leaving his soft bed, used to take his rest lying on the hard boards. His uncle, by the mother, the holy arch-priest of Gumiel, was his first preceptor. He assisted, with this uncle, at all the divine offices; and the rest of his time, which his studies and other necessary duties left free, he devoted entirely to private prayer, serious or pious reading, and charitable employments; spending none of his moments in the usual amusements of youth, which yet may be sanctified by moderation and a good intention, inasmuch as some exercise is necessary in that tender age to maintain the vigour both of the body and mind.

The saint, at fourteen years of age, was sent to the public schools of Palencia, which were soon after transferred to Salamanca, where the university, which is the most famous and best provided in all Spain, was erected in the middle of the thirteenth century. Dominic here laid in a solid stock of learning, and became a great proficient in rhetoric, philosophy, and divinity. He was well versed in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures and fathers. Instructed by the oracle of the Holy Ghost that the spirit of

<sup>1</sup> James Echard, *Bibl. Script. Ord. Prædic. t. i.*

<sup>2</sup> Tournon, *Vie de St Domin. p. 744.*  
<sup>3</sup> Bremond, General of this Order, in his dissertations entitled "*Epistolæ ad quosdam viros eruditos*"; viz. the Bollandists, who, before the original authorities were produced, had called in question this circumstance.



the Lord rests only on chaste souls, he watched with the utmost attention over his heart and its avenues, which are the senses; these he kept in constant subjection by austere mortification. Always walking in the presence of God, he made his conversation even with the virtuous very short. Boards, or the floor, were the only bed on which he took his rest. The death of his mother was a sensible affliction to him, but he improved it to a more perfect disengagement of his heart from the world. From her example he had learned a tender devotion to the holy Mother of God, and an extraordinary affection for the poor; to assist whom, in a famine, he not only gave all his money and goods, but sold even his books and his own writings and commentaries. This was in the twenty-first year of his age. So heroic a charity touched the hearts of all the masters, scholars, and citizens; the latter opened their granaries, and the former emptied their purses to supply the necessitous. Thus Dominic, yet a scholar, became by his example a preacher to his masters. The charity with which his heart was moved towards all that were in distress seemed to have no bounds. A poor woman one day begged of him, with many tears, an alms to redeem her brother, who was made a slave by the Moors. The saint's heart seemed rent with compassion, and having already given away all his money to others, he said to her, "I have neither gold nor silver; but am able to work. Offer me to the Moor in exchange for your brother. I am willing to be his slave." The woman, astonished at such a proposal, durst not accept it; but Dominic's charity was not less before God. As soon as he had finished his studies and taken his degrees, he explained the holy scriptures in the schools and preached the word of God to the people at Palentia with wonderful reputation and success. Everyone looked upon the man of God as an oracle, consulted him in all doubts, whether of learning or of conscience, and acquiesced in his decisions.

Azebedo, a zealous pastor, being made Bishop of Osma in 1198, reformed his chapter, introducing into it regular canons of St Austin, and invited St Dominic, who was a native of his diocese, to accept a canonry. The disciple of Jesus Christ, believing that he heard the voice of God himself in that of his pastor, left Palentia and received the habit of the regular canons, being then twenty-eight years old. Blessed Jordan, who was familiarly acquainted with St Dominic, informs us that the holy canon had no sooner taken possession of his prebend, than he began to shine as a bright star in the church of Osma. He practised all the austerities of the ancient fathers of the desert and attained to that purity of heart and perfect disengagement from creatures which made up the character of those great saints. He read the conferences of Cassian and made them the rule of his conduct. Whilst he thus laboured to make his own soul pleasing to God, the fire of divine love was daily more and more enkindled in his breast, and he was consumed with an ardent zeal for the salvation of infidels

and sinners. To move the divine mercy to regard them with pity, he spent often whole nights in the church at prayer, watering the steps of the altar with abundance of tears, in which he was heard to sigh and groan before the Father of mercy, in the earnestness and deep affliction of his heart; never ceasing to beg with the greatest ardour the grace to gain some of those unhappy souls to Christ. He studied to conceal from the eyes of men, as much as possible, the holy severity with which he treated his own body; but its effects appeared sensibly in the decay of his strength. His bishop therefore ordered him to mix a little wine with the water which he drank. He still found means to redouble the macerations of his flesh, as he saw the loss of souls and the offences of God multiplied by the growth of heresy and impiety. Since the reformation of the chapter, the titles and offices of dean and provost were changed into those of prior and sub-prior. The bishop himself was prior, and St Dominic sub-prior, or the immediate head and superior of that body. He also assisted his prelate in the government and reformation of the whole diocese, and preached in it assiduously with incredible zeal and fruit, during five years.

Alphonsus IX, King of Castille, chose the Bishop of Osma to go ambassador into La Marche to negotiate a match between the daughter of the earl of that country and his son Prince Ferdinand. Some take this La Marche for a province in the north of Germany or in Sweden; others, for the territory of that name in Limosin, in France. The bishop took Dominic with him. In their way they passed through Languedoc, which was then filled with the abominations of the heresy of the Albigenses. He in whose house they lodged at Toulouse was tainted with it. St Dominic, pierced to the heart with compassion for the unhappy condition of his soul, in that one night made him a perfect convert. The treaty of marriage being concluded, the ambassadors returned to Spain, but were sent back with a sumptuous equipage to conduct the princess thither. They arrived at her father's house only to assist at the melancholy ceremony of her funeral. Being desirous to devote themselves to labour for the conversion of souls deprived of the light of faith, they sent back their equipage into Spain and went themselves to Rome to ask of Pope Innocent III leave either to stay in Languedoc to labour among the Albigenses, or to go to preach the gospel to the infidels in the north. His holiness, charmed with their zeal and virtue, exhorted them rather to choose the neighbouring harvest and to oppose a heresy which threatened the church with the utmost fury. The holy bishop begged he might be allowed to resign his episcopal see in Spain. This his holiness would not consent to, but gave him leave to stay two years in Languedoc. In their return they made a visit of devotion to Citeaux, a place then renowned for the sanctity of the monks that inhabited it. They arrived at Montpellier towards the end of the year 1205, where they met several Cistercian abbots, who were com-

missioned by the pope to oppose the reigning heresies. The archbishop and Dominic proposed that to labour with success they ought to employ persuasion and example rather than terror, and that their preachers should imitate the poverty of Christ and the apostles, travelling on foot without money, equipage, or provisions. The abbots readily came into the proposal and sent away their horses and servants. These missionaries saw the dangers and difficulties that attended their undertaking, but they were persuaded they should be abundantly recompensed for all they could suffer if they should be so happy as to become instrumental in rescuing one soul from the slavery of sin, or to lay down their life in such a cause. The prodigious growth of impiety in that country, and the obstinacy of the disease, moved them to compassion, but did not terrify them, though the evils seemed extreme. The heretics, not content to fill their own country with terror and desolation, overran several other provinces in troops of four, five, or eight thousand men, pillaged the countries and massacred the priests, flaying some alive and scourging others to death; in plundering the churches, they broke and profaned the sacred vessels and sacrilegiously converted the ornaments of the altars into women's clothes. King Philip Augustus cut in pieces ten thousand of these banditti in the province of Berri, they having penetrated into the very centre of his kingdom.<sup>1</sup> Dominic undertook to stem the torrent by his feeble voice; and God was pleased to make his preaching the instrument of his grace to strike the rocks, to open the uncircumcised ears, and to soften the hardened hearts of many which even the thunder of a St Bernard had not been able to move. The conversion of many most obstinate sinners may be regarded as the greatest of our saint's miracles.

The first conference of the missionaries with the heretics was held in a borough near Montpellier, and lasted eight days; during which each day several remarkable conversions were wrought. The apostolic men preached after this eight days at Beziers, where they gained several, though the far greater number shut their ears against the Catholic faith. Diego and Dominic proceeded thence to Carcassone and Montreal. At this last place they disputed during fifteen days with the four chiefs of the Albigensian sect, by which conference a hundred and fifty persons were brought over to the truth. St Dominic drew up in writing a short exposition of the Catholic faith, with proofs of each article from the New Testament. This writing he gave to the heretics to examine. Their ministers and chiefs, after much altercation about it, agreed to throw it into the fire, saying that if it burned they would regard the doctrine which it contained as false. Being cast thrice into the flames, it was not damaged by them. Nevertheless, only one officer that was present, and afterwards publicly attested the miracle, was converted by it.

St Dominic saw with grief that many children of Catholic parents, for

<sup>1</sup> Le Gendre, *Hist. de Fr.* t. ii. p. 364.

want of the means of procuring a proper education, were neglected in their youth or fell into the hands of those that corrupted their morals or their faith. To cut off the source of this fatal disorder, being assisted by the liberalities of several bishops, he founded the numerous nunnery of our Lady of Prouille, near Fanjaux, in 1206, which he put under the rule of St Austin, adding certain particular constitutions, which were approved by Gregory IX. This house became a sanctuary to many ladies who desired to find a secure retreat from the corruption of the world, and a nursery of religion and piety for those who were afterwards to encounter its dangers. This monastery is regarded to this day as the chief or mother-house of all the nuns of this Order. In 1207 a great conference was opened between the Catholic preachers and the heretics in the palace of Raymund Roger, Count of Foix, who treated both parties in their turns at his table. His countess and one of his sisters followed the Waldenses; his other sister adhered to the Albigenses. The issue of this disputation was the conversion of a great number of heretics of distinction, and of him who had been appointed judge or arbitrator, a man of learning who had been a warm abettor of the sect of the Albigenses. After this conference the Cistercians returned to their monasteries, and the holy Bishop of Osma to his diocese, the two years allowed him by the pope being almost expired. The heretics themselves had a great opinion of his sanctity, and called him one of the predestinate. He died soon after his arrival at Osma.

He had been almost two years superior of the mission in Languedoc, in which charge, at his departure, he appointed St Dominic his successor, to whom Pope Innocent III confirmed the same in 1207. The saint, vested with this authority, established wholesome regulations to be observed by the zealous preachers who laboured with him. Some date from this time, but improperly, the institution of his Order. The murder of the pope's legate, Peter of Castelnau, or Chateaufneuf, who was assassinated by a servant of the Count of Toulouse and another ruffian on the 15th of January 1208, and other outrages committed by the heretics, set all Christendom in a flame, and an army was set on foot to extirpate the authors of these violences. St Dominic had no share in those transactions, and made use of no other arms to repulse injuries than those of meekness and patience. He never complained of any affronts or evils which he received, courageously encountered every danger wherever the good of souls called him, being desirous to glorify God by shedding his blood in his cause if called to such a happiness, and he studied only to procure all the good in his power to those who hated and persecuted him. A certain heretic who was unknown to the saint offered himself one day to be his guide, but led him through rough ways over stones and briers, so that the saint's feet were much wounded, for he always walked barefoot. The meekness with which Dominic received the affront and the joy with which he comforted

his treacherous guide when he saw him in confusion, calling his blood the subject of his triumph, so moved the heretic that he became a Catholic. At another time the heretics posted two assassins to murder the saint at a place between Prouille and Fanjaux, which to this day, from that black attempt, retains the name of *Al siccardi*; but he escaped their hands. Afterwards some of that party asked the saint what he would have done if he had met them: "I would have thanked God," said he, "and would have begged as a favour that my blood might have been let out drop by drop, and my limbs lopped off one by one, to prolong my torments and enhance my crown"; with which answer his enemies were exceedingly affected. A poor man, infected with the heresy of the Albigenses, confessed the abominations of that sect, but declared he could not abandon those upon whom he depended for his daily subsistence. St Dominic, hearing him make this answer, was moved with so tender a compassion for a soul upon the brink of perishing that he offered to sell himself for a slave to procure this man means for his subsistence that he might serve God; and he would have done it had not God furnished the poor man with a provision otherwise, says B. Jordan and Theodoric. The Count of Montfort, with only twelve hundred men, in a sally from Moret on the 12th of September 1213, by his incredible valour, routed and dispersed the great army of one hundred thousand men over which St Dominic assured him God would grant him a glorious victory. This left the King of Arragon and sixteen thousand men dead in the field. This prediction was the only share which the original historians mentioned St Dominic to have had in this war, whatever certain moderns, with Baillet, may affirm. The continuators of Bollandus pretend that in quality of inquisitor he delivered those among the Albigenses that were taken, and persisted obstinate to the secular judges, that they might put them to death. But this is mere conjecture, founded on mistake, as the learned fathers, Echard<sup>1</sup> and Tournon<sup>2</sup> have shown. St Dominic never appears to have any way concurred to the execution of any of those unhappy persons that then suffered. The authors of his life mention that by his credit and entreaties he saved the life of a young man who was going to the place where he was to be burnt, the saint assuring the judges that he would die in the Catholic faith, which was verified when some years after he became a zealous Catholic, and made a happy end in the holy Order of our saint. But the original historians mention no other arms to have been used by him against the heretics than those of instruction, patience, penance, fasting, watching, tears, and prayer.

So ardent was his zeal for the salvation of souls that he was consumed with a burning desire to sacrifice for them his liberty, health, and life. Inured to continual labours, he was indefatigable in his apostolic functions;

<sup>1</sup> Echard, De Script. Ord. Prædic. t. i. pp. 55, 58.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. 18, p. 130.

and the greatest difficulties, far from abating, seemed to raise his courage and to give new vigour to his heroic soul. To his incredible labours he added the austerities of penance. He often allowed himself in his fasts, especially during all Lent, no other nourishment than bread and water; and spending with his companion a great part of the night in prayer, he reserved only a short time for rest, which he took lying on a board. Regardless of dangers, he never discontinued his missions or preaching among the Albigenses, how much soever their rage was exasperated. He often boldly exposed himself to the most cruel torments and death among them; he even courageously met a band of ruffians near Carcassone, who were still reeking with the blood of a Cistercian abbot and monk whom they had barbarously slain. But God was his protector and prayer his shield and strength. During the great battle of Muret, St Dominic was not in the field, as some moderns have pretended, but in the church within the fortress at his prayers.<sup>1</sup> The same was his practice on other like occasions. Theodoric, Stephen of Sassenac, and others, relate that when St Dominic was employed on his mission at Castres, the abbot of St Vincent's one day desired his company at dinner. After sermon the saint continued at his devotions in the church so long that he quite forgot the necessities of the body, which he was frequently apt to do. At the hour of dinner the abbot sent a clerk to seek for him. The messenger knew the church to be the place where he was generally to be found, and going thither saw him ravished in an ecstasy, raised several cubits above the ground and without motion. He contemplated him a considerable time in that posture, and waited till the saint, coming to himself, gently fell to the ground before he durst approach him.

St Dominic, during his apostolical labours in Languedoc, instituted the celebrated devotion of the Rosary, consisting of the recital of fifteen Our Fathers and a hundred and fifty Hail Marys, in honour of the fifteen principal mysteries of the life and sufferings of our Blessed Saviour and of his holy Mother. The divine and most excellent prayer which our Redeemer, who promises to grant all that we request in his name, has drawn up as the form of our supplications, contains the petitions of all those things we are to ask or hope for of God, and comprises the exercise of all the sublime virtues by which we pay to him the rational homage of our affections. In the Angelical Salutation are comprised our praises and thanks to God for the great mysteries of the incarnation and of our redemption, the source of all our good; and these praises are expressed in words of which the Holy Ghost himself was the author, which, though addressed to the Virgin Mary, contain much more the praises of her Divine Son, whom we acknowledge the cause of all hers and our happiness. The earnest intercession of this Mother of God and of mercy is also implored

<sup>1</sup> So Malvenda, the ancient chronicle, called *Præclara Francorum Facinora*, ad an. 1213, &c.

in our behalf both at present and for the tremendous moment of our departure hence; and to move hers and her Divine Son's compassion, we acknowledge our own deep sense of our miseries which we display before the eyes of heaven under the extensive and most expressive humbling title of sinners. These prayers are so disposed in the Rosary as to comprise an abstract of the history of our Blessed Redeemer's holy life and sufferings, the great object of the continual devotion and meditation of Christians; for each mystery whereof we praise God, and through it ask his graces and blessings for ourselves and others. The ignorance of many and the blasphemies of others among the Albigenes with regard to these most sacred mysteries moved the zealous and apostolic servant of God to teach the people to honour them by an easy method equally adapted to persons of the weakest understanding and to those that are most learned or the most advanced in the exercises of sublime contemplation, who find in it a most inexhausted fund of the highest acts of faith, hope, divine love, praise and thanksgiving, with a supplication for succour in all spiritual and corporeal necessities, which they always repeat with fresh ardour. St Dominic afterwards established the same method of devotion at Bologna and in other places.

The saint, after having founded his nunnery of Prouille, established an institute afterwards called his third Order, in which the strictest regularity is observed, but no extraordinary austerities are prescribed. Some persons of this third Order live in monasteries and are properly nuns; others live in their own houses and endeavour to sanctify their work and the duties of a civil life by certain exercises of regularity and devotion, and by dedicating part of their time to works of mercy, especially in serving the poor in hospitals and prisons.<sup>1</sup> St Dominic had spent ten years in preaching in Languedoc when, in 1215, he founded his religious Order of Preaching Friars, the plan of which he had meditated some time before. He had till then worn the habit of a regular canon of St Austin and followed that rule. But he earnestly desired to revive an apostolic spirit in the ministers of the altar, the want of which in many was a subject of great scandal to the people and a great source of the overflowing of vice and heresy. This spirit is founded on a sincere contempt of the world and a perfect disinterestedness; for so long as the love of the world, or a relish for its vanity, delights, and riches, keeps possession of a heart there can be no room for the Holy Ghost. The fences by which this spirit had been formerly maintained in the clergy were then by custom easily broke through by many without scruple; wherefore he conceived a design of raising others that might be stronger. With this view he established an Order of the religious men, not like the ancient monks of the desert, who were laymen and merely contemplatives, but who, with the strictest retirement and assiduous exercises of contemplation, should join a close

<sup>1</sup> Touroz, lib. i. c. 17.

application to sacred studies and all the functions of a pastoral life, especially that of preaching.

St Dominic for a long time recommended his design to God by fervent prayer, and communicated it to the bishops of Languedoc and Provence, who all applauded the project and pressed him to hasten the execution. Everyone judged him worthy to be the father of preachers who was their perfect model. Sixteen of his fellow-missionaries came readily into his project; and Peter Cellani, one of this number, gave some houses he was possessed of in Toulouse, in which they formed themselves into a regular community under the protection of the bishop. This was the first convent of the Order. To establish it the founder was obliged to go to Rome, whither he accompanied Fulco, the Bishop of Toulouse, who was called to assist at the fourth general council of Lateran. Pope Innocent III, who had then governed the church eighteen years, received the saint with great demonstrations of kindness, on account of the reputation of his sanctity and the recommendation of his bishop. He had himself drawn up a decree which he inserted in the tenth chapter of the council, to enforce the obligation of preaching and the necessity of choosing for pastors men who are powerful in words and works, who will instruct and edify their flocks both by example and preaching, a neglect of which was the source of the ignorance, disorders, and heresies that then reigned in several provinces. Nevertheless, though the saint's design was most agreeable to his holiness, Theodoric, the Bishop of Orvieto, and Vincent of Beauvois say that he at first made some difficulty to approve his Order, upon late complaints that too great a multiplication of Orders would bring confusion, and that it was better to reform those that were already established. But the same authors add that, the night following, the pope dreamed he saw the Lateran church in danger of falling, and that St Dominic stepped in and supported it with his shoulders. Be that as it will, B. Jordan and F. Humbert assure us that the pope approved the new Order by word of mouth, bidding the founder draw up the constitutions and lay them before him.

The saint was present at the fourth council of Lateran which, though very numerous and splendid, lasted only three weeks, having condemned the errors of the Albigenses and other heretics, framed several canons for the reformation of manners, and taken into consideration a new crusade for the recovery of the Holy Land, which had been lately conquered by the infidels a second time. The twenty-first is the famous canon which enjoins that all the faithful who are arrived to years of discretion shall confess all their sins at least once a year to their own *proper priest*, and shall receive the eucharist at least every Easter, unless, with the advice of their proper priest, they abstain from it for some time, upon some reasonable account. The thirteenth prohibits the erecting of any new religious Order.



The council, which consisted of four hundred and twelve bishops and near eight hundred abbots, priors, and deputies of absent prelates, broke up about the end of November 1215, and St Dominic arrived at Toulouse the beginning of the following year.

St Dominic arrived at Rome with a copy of his rules in September 1216. He found access to his holiness difficult for some time, but was encouraged by a vision recorded by Theodoric and copied by Fleury.<sup>1</sup> Pope Honorius III confirmed his Order and its constitutions by two bulls, both dated on the 26th of December the same year. He detained the saint several months in Rome to preach in that city, which commission he executed with incredible applause and success. He put the pope in mind that several persons that attended his court could not seek instructions abroad, and therefore a domestic master of the sacred studies in his palace would be of great advantage. His holiness hereupon created the office of Master of the Sacred Palace, who by his place is the pope's domestic theologian, assists at all consistories, whether public or private, confers the degree of doctor at court, approves all theses and books, and nominates the pope's preachers. If he is absent from court, he has a right to substitute another in his place. Pope Honorius obliged St Dominic to take upon himself that charge, which has been ever since committed to one of his Order. The saint at Rome dictated comments on the Epistles of St Paul, which are much commended by several writers of that age, though they are now lost. He had learned from St Chrysostom what an inexhausted treasure of piety and spiritual knowledge a Christian preacher will draw from assiduous meditation on the aspired writings of this apostle, which he strongly recommended to his religious, and he carried always a copy of that sacred book in his pocket. When not employed in public functions or necessary duties, he was always to be found in the church or in retirement. When out of necessity he conversed with others, his discourse was usually only on God, and always seasoned with so much unction and prudence that worldlings never thought it importunate; and pious persons sought his conversation with extreme eagerness. With the consent of his holiness he returned to Toulouse in May, and spent some time in forming his religious brethren in the practice of the most perfect maxims of an interior life, the most necessary qualification in preachers of the divine word.

St Dominic went again to Rome in 1217, and the pope, desiring that his Order should have a house in that city, gave him the Church of St Sixtus; and, whilst a convent was building there, the saint, by order of his holiness, read lectures of theology, both in the palace and in the city, and preached in St Peter's Church with such eloquence and zeal as drew on him the attention and admiration of the whole city. The many illustrious

<sup>1</sup> Lib. lxxviii. n. 5.

miracles by which God honoured his ministry in that city procured him the name of the *Thaumaturgus* of that age. Among others, Theodoric relates<sup>1</sup> that a certain gentlewoman named Gutadona, coming one day home from hearing his sermon, found her little child dead. In her grief she took him in her arms out of the cradle and, carrying him to St Sixtus's, laid him at the feet of the saint. She said nothing; but her sorrow spoke without words. The servant of God was moved to compassion and, after saying a fervent prayer, made the sign of the cross on the child, and restored him to life. The pope would have published this miracle in the pulpit, but the tears, entreaties, and confusion of the saint prevented him. St Dominic likewise raised, whole and sound, a mason who had been crushed to death by the fall of a vault in building the convent of St Sixtus. He restored to health a religious man, the procurator of his convent, whilst the brethren were reciting by his bedside the prayers appointed for one in the agony. The Bishop of Orvieto assures us that he had the account of this miracle from the mouth of the person who had been thus miraculously delivered from the gates of death and recovered in a moment a state of perfect health, which he long enjoyed, and of which he made a very good use.<sup>2</sup>

St Dominic, besides many other miracles, raised a third man to life in this monastery of St Sixtus in the presence of a great multitude of honourable persons. This was the young Lord Napoleon. The fact is related by Theodoric of Apolda,<sup>3</sup> F. Humbert,<sup>4</sup> a third very ancient historian quoted by F. Echard,<sup>5</sup> John Longinus,<sup>6</sup> Malvenda, and many others, and happened on the following occasion: Several nuns lived in Rome without keeping enclosure, and almost without regularity, some dispersed in small monasteries, others in the houses of their parents or friends; for, before the council of Trent, strict perpetual enclosure was not always a necessary part of that state; and though, since that council, Bonacina and some other canonists call it an essential law, yet some nunneries in Flanders plead an exemption upon pretence of ancient prescription. Pope Innocent III had made several attempts to assemble all such nuns then in Rome into one enclosed house, but had not been able, with all his address and authority, to compass it. Honorius III, seeing all other methods miscarry, committed the management of this reformation to St Dominic. The saint desired that three cardinals should be nominated commissaries with him in order to facilitate the success of the commission, and his holiness appointed Hugolin, dean of the sacred college, Nicholas, Bishop of Tusculum, and Stephen, of Fossa Nuova, cardinal priest of the twelve apostles. St Dominic, in order to remove several difficulties, offered to leave to these nuns his own monastery of St Sixtus, which was built

<sup>1</sup> C. 7, Fleury, lib. lxxviii. n. 31.

<sup>2</sup> C. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. vi. Hist. Polonica, ad. an. 1218.

<sup>4</sup> Apud Bolland. p. 459.

<sup>5</sup> Theodoric, c. 7, n. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Echard, t. i. p. 30; Fleury, lib. lxxviii. n. 32.

and then ready to receive them, and which Innocent III had formerly offered them; and he undertook to build for his friars a new convent at St Sabina; to which the pope willingly agreed. The monastery of St Mary, beyond the Tiber, was the principal and most obstinate of those that were to be thus reformed. The saint repaired thither with the three cardinals, and exhorted the nuns to a compliance with such force of reasoning and so much charity in his heart that the truth was victorious in his mouth. The abbess first of all, then all the nuns except one, entered into a voluntary engagement to obey; but the devil was not so easily to be triumphed over. No sooner were the commissaries gone but the parents, friends, and protectors of the nuns ran thither and buzzed it in their ears that they would repent at leisure of so hasty a step which could never be recalled; that their house was too ancient and noble, their conduct too virtuous and irreproachable, their privileges of too old a standing to be struck at, and that no authority could oblige them to rules of that sort, to which they had never engaged themselves, and under which they would never have embraced that manner of life. Such discourses were too flattering not to please persons to whom their present independence seemed too dear and valuable a right to be given up. Accordingly the whole community changed their former resolution and were determined never to comply. St Dominic gave them some days to reflect, and prevented the pope from having recourse to violent measures, which never gain the heart and are seldom expedient in duties which must be voluntary; in the meantime he fasted and prayed, recommending the matter to God. After some days he went again to St Mary's, said mass there and after he had offered the holy sacrifice made a second discourse to the nuns, mildly reproaching them for their reluctancy, saying, "Can you then repent of a promise you have made to God? can you refuse to give yourselves up to him without reserve, and to serve him with your whole hearts?" He tempered his discourse with that natural sweetness which it was hard for anyone to resist and, at the same time, his exhortation was so strong and affecting that, at the end of it, the abbess and all her nuns confirmed to him by vow their readiness to comply in all things with his holiness's inclinations. They, moreover, begged that the saint himself would be their director and give them his own rule; to which he agreed. Whilst things were making ready for their removal, he shut up the avenues of the cloister to prevent their friends having access, who might any more endeavour to stagger their resolution.

On Ash Wednesday, in 1218, the abbess and some of her nuns went to their new monastery of St Sixtus to take possession of it. They were in the chapter-house with St Dominic and the three cardinals above-mentioned, treating of the rights, revenues, and administration of the new community, when on a sudden there came in a person, tearing his hair and making great lamentation, crying out that the Lord Napoleon, Cardinal

Stephen's nephew, was thrown from his horse and killed by the fall. At this news the afflicted uncle fell speechless with his head upon the breast of St Dominic, who sat by his side; and his silence was more expressive of his sorrow than any words could have been. The saint endeavoured at first to alleviate his grief; then ordered the body of Napoleon to be brought into the house, and bid brother Tancred make an altar ready that he might say mass. When he had prepared himself, the cardinals with their attendants, the abbess with her nuns, the Dominican friars, and a great concourse of people, went to the church. The saint, in celebrating the divine mysteries, shed a flood of tears and, while he elevated the body of Christ in his pure hands, was himself in an ecstasy lifted up a whole cubit from the ground, in the sight and to the amazement of all that were present. The sacrifice being ended, the blessed man went to the corpse to implore the mercy of God, being followed by all the company; and, standing by the body, he disposed the bruised limbs in their proper places; and then betook himself to prayer. After some time he rose up and made the sign of the cross over the corpse; then lifting up his hands to heaven, he himself being, by the power of God, at the same time raised from the ground and suspended in the air, cried out with a loud voice, "Napoleon, I say to thee, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, arise." That instant, in the sight of the whole multitude, the young man arose sound and whole. Not only all present, but the whole city, particularly the sacred college and the pope, gave solemn thanks to the Almighty who, in their unhappy days, had vouchsafed to renew the wonders which he had wrought in the establishment of his church. The Dominican friars having taken possession of the church and convent of St Sabina, the nuns of St Mary were settled in that of St Sixtus before the first Sunday in Lent, receiving a new habit from the hands of St Dominic, together with his rule. Yvo, Bishop of Cracow, and Chancellor of Poland, was at Rome when Napoleon was raised to life, and an eye-witness to that stupendous miracle. He entreated St Dominic to give the habit of his Order to his two nephews SS. Hyacinth and Ceslas, and to two others of his domestics. The saint sent certain religious brethren to Bologna in 1217, there to lay the foundation of a convent, which has continued ever since one of the most flourishing monasteries in the world.

In 1218 he took a journey from Rome through Languedoc into Spain, and founded a famous convent at Segovia and another at Madrid. He returned to Toulouse in April 1219, and from thence went to Paris. This seems by all the ancient histories of his life to have been the first visit he made to that city, though Baillet pretends, without grounds, as Touron shows, that he had been there before. He did not stay many weeks in that capital, but gained souls to God by his sermons and instructions, and received into his Order many persons of eminence.

Alexander II, King of Scotland, happened to be then at Paris, being come to pay a visit to Queen Blanche, the mother of St Lewis. He was much taken with the discourse and sanctity of the holy founder, and obtained of him a promise that he would send some of his religious brethren into Scotland, as Hector Boëtius and Bishop Lesley inform us. The saint settled in good order his great convent which was founded in the street of St Jacques, from which the Dominican friars are usually called in France Jacobins. After this he left Paris, and, having founded convents on his road at Avignon, Asti, and Bergamo, arrived at Bologna about the end of summer in 1219, which city he made from that time his ordinary residence to the end of his life, though he sometimes made excursions to Rome, Florence, and other places. At Bologna, the curate of St Nicholas, with the bishop's consent, bestowed his church on the saint, and he and several archdeacons, doctors, and eminent professors entered themselves in his Order. In 1220 he waited on Pope Honorius III at Viterbo and met St Francis at Rome, in the house of Cardinal Hugolin, their common friend, who afterwards succeeding Honorius III under the name of Gregory IX, chose out of the Order of St Dominic thirty-three bishops, one patriarch of Antioch, and eight legates. St Dominic had till then taken no other title but that of superior. In 1220 Honorius III commanded him to be styled general; and the saint returning to Bologna, there held a chapter of all the superiors in his Order at Whitsuntide the same year.

The incredible fatigues which this apostolic life cost the servant of God were no motive with him to abate his continual fasts and other austerities; so different is the spirit of fervour with which the saints are animated from the sloth of those Christians who seek every shadow of pretence for dispensing themselves even from fasts of precept, to serve as a cloak to cover their sensuality and remissness. He took all possible precautions to prevent riches ever becoming the portion and the bane of his Order. He strenuously refused to accept large or superfluous donations. When a rich man of Bologna, by a public deed which he had procured secretly to be ratified by the bishop, hoping that the prelate's authority might overcome the saint's reluctance, had settled his estate on his convent of St Nicholas, the holy founder was no sooner apprized of it than he renounced the donation for ever; and, notwithstanding the entreaties of many, publicly tore the deed in presence of the benefactor, as F. Ralph of Faenza,<sup>1</sup> an eye-witness, relates. Much more was he an enemy to sordid presents, any indirect ways of procuring them, or that importunity in asking which is a kind of extortion and, when for superfluities, a robbery of the poor. That minister of the altar debases the dignity of the sacred character with which he is invested, and of the divine mysteries with the dispensation of

<sup>1</sup> Apud Bolland. t. i. Aug. p. 640, n. 40; Fleury, lib. lxxviii. n. 49.

which he is honoured, who suffers any view of temporal interest to steal into his heart, or secretly to have any share in his motives of action. Such a one is a hireling, and by covetousness loses the fruit of his labours. He who serves the altar is entitled to live by it; but a faithful minister is careful not to lose his eternal reward by seeking one that is temporal and fears to impair the divine honour by suffering the purity of his intention in seeking *only* God in all that he does to be sullied by the least mixture or deliberate thought of anything else. To prevent, as much as possible, the danger of such a snare, St Dominic desired to cut off all superfluities in his Order, and, the more easily to remove the passions and desires which they beget in the heart, he would have all that could be spared given immediately to the poor, and allowed no one to be solicitous for the morrow. To one so perfectly dead to himself and the world, the victory over his passions seemed natural and easy; and its visible fruit was a happy tranquillity and evenness of soul, which nothing seemed able to disturb or ever move to the least impatience or complaint. By these virtues and happy dispositions he was fitted for an admirable purity of heart and sublime grace of prayer, to which we are chiefly to ascribe the high degree of sanctity to which he was raised, and the wonderful fruits of his zeal in converting so many hardened sinners and in promoting the spiritual advancement of others. He never began to instruct any one, or to do any other spiritual function without first imploring on his knees the intercession of the Mother of God. Prayer and holy meditation were his darling exercises, to which he devoted both his days and nights, whenever other duties or necessary functions allowed it. In conversing with others it was his delight to speak only of God and heavenly things; and in travelling he often used to say to his companions: "Walk a little before, and let us think on our Redeemer." This he did that he might give a freer scope to his sighs and tears.

Humility gave his prayer its force and efficacy. Before he came into any town he fell on the ground and begged of God that the entrance of such a sinner might not draw down his vengeance on the people. He behaved himself as the servant of all his brethren, and desired as much as possible to bear the burdens of everyone; and if he lay under a necessity of giving an account of his actions, his modesty and sincere humility appeared in all his words. He extolled the zeal and charity of the bishops and magistrates, and the devotion and piety of the people; forgetting only the share which he had in what was properly his own work. He never spoke of his birth, the success of his labours, his great enterprises, or anything else that could tend to his honour. It was his study to conceal his charities to the poor and the graces which he received from God. Nevertheless, to show the excess of the divine mercy, he sometimes communicated certain secret sentiments of his heart to some intimate friends who were

great servants of God. Thus, as he was one day conversing with a devout prior of the Cistercian order, who was afterwards Bishop of Alatri, speaking of the goodness of God, he said that he had never asked any particular favour of the divine goodness which he had not obtained. "Why, then," said the prior, "do not you ask that Master Conrad may receive a call from God to enter himself in your Order?" This Conrad was a German, a man in the highest repute, doctor and professor in laws, and in his inclinations most opposite to such a state. St Dominic spent that night in the church at prayer, begging this favour of God. Next morning, at the hour of prime, Conrad came into the church and threw himself at the holy founder's feet, begging that he might be admitted to the habit; and he became a great ornament to this Order by his learning and much more by the sanctity of his life. Constantine, Bishop of Orvieto, assures us that he received this account from the aforesaid prior when he was Bishop of Alatri. St Dominic never ceased to pray for the conversion of infidels and sinners. It was his earnest desire, if it had been God's will, to shed his blood for Christ, and to travel over all the barbarous nations of the earth to announce to them the happy doctrine of eternal life. In these warm sentiments of holy zeal he made the ministry of the divine word the chief end of his institute; would have all his religious to be applied to it, every one according to his capacity, and those who had particular talents for it, never to discontinue the office of preaching, except in certain intervals allotted to retirement, that they might preach to themselves in silence. To this great function he prepared his religious by long habits of virtue, especially of prayer, humility, self-denial, and obedience. It was a maxim which he frequently inculcated to them, "That a man who governs his passions is master of the world. We must either command them, or be enslaved to them. It is better to be the hammer than the anvil."

Though mild, and in things indifferent full of condescension to all, he was inflexible in maintaining the severe discipline he had established in his Order. St Francis of Assisium, coming to Bologna in 1220, was so much offended to find the convent of his friars in that city built in a stately manner, and not consistent with his idea of the austere poverty and penance which he professed by his rule, that he would not lodge in it, and went to the monastery of St Dominic, which was mean and low, where he stayed some days to enjoy our saint's conversation. St Dominic made frequent missionary excursions; and founded convents at Bergamo, Brescia, Faenza, and Viterbo, and visited those he had already founded. He sent some of his religious into Morocco, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, and Ireland; and Brother Gilbert, with twelve others, into England, who established monasteries of this Order in Canterbury, London, and Oxford. The holy patriarch, in his second general chapter, held at Bologna in 1221, divided his order into eight provinces and sent some of his religious into Hungary,

Greece, Palestine, and other countries. Among these missionaries, F. Paul, of Hungary, founded in Lower Hungary the monasteries of Gever and Vesprim, converted great numbers of idolaters in Croatia, Sclavonia, Transylvania, Valachia, Moldavia, Bosnia, and Servia; and, leaving the churches which he had there founded under the care of other labourers, preached with the like success in Rumania, the inhabitants of which country were most savage and barbarous. He baptized among them a duke called Brut, with his vassals, and one of the chief princes of the country named Bernborch, Andrew, the King of Hungary and father of St Elizabeth, standing godfather. This zealous apostle of so many nations suffered a glorious martyrdom with ninety religious friars of his Order, dispersed in those parts; some being beheaded, others shot with arrows, stabbed with lances, or burnt by the Tartars, in 1242, in their great irruption into those countries.<sup>1</sup> Bishop Sadoc, with forty-nine religious of this Order, were butchered for the faith by these barbarians in a second irruption in 1260, at Sendomir, in Poland, and are honoured on the 2nd of June.

St Dominic had a foresight of his happy death long before it happened. Setting out on a journey from Bologna for Milan, he said to his friends there, "You now see me well in health; but before the glorious assumption of the Virgin Mother I shall depart hence to the Lord." He returned to Bologna in the heats of summer, and was seized with a burning fever which, from the beginning, was judged mortal. Nevertheless, according to his custom, he desired to pass a great part of the night in the church at prayer; but after matins was obliged to retire to his chamber, though he did not lie down on a bed. During his sickness he continued always cheerful in his countenance. When he was grown very weak he assembled his religious brethren, and in a moving discourse which he called his last testament and the inheritance which he left them, he exhorted them to constant humility, poverty, fervour, and watchfulness, in particular against the enemy of purity. Seeing them weep about him, he promised never to forget them when he should be gone to God. After having received the last sacraments he continued in secret prayer till he calmly expired on the 6th of August 1221, being fifty-one years old. Cardinal Hugolin, at the news of his death, hastened to Bologna, performed his funeral obsequies, and composed his epitaph. A history of a great number of miracles performed by means of this saint, and attested by eye-witnesses, may be read in the Bollandists.<sup>2</sup> St Dominic was canonized by Gregory IX in 1234.

The characteristical virtue of this saint was an eminent spirit of prayer and the constant recollection of his soul in God; and this practice he recommended above all others to his disciples. One of the greatest lights

<sup>1</sup> Bern. Guidonis in Chron.; Greg. IX in Bullar, Prædic. t. i. p. 26; Theodor. n. 322; Bzovius in Annal. Mamachi, Annal. ad 1221.

<sup>2</sup> P. 541.



of his Order, and of the church, Bartholomew de Martyribus, Archbishop of Braga, addresses himself to all pastors on this subject as follows:<sup>1</sup> "Woe to you, ministers of the Lord, if the source of devotion be dried up in your souls. This tender and sincere spirit of piety is the spring of living water which communicates fertility to all our virtues and sanctifies all our exercises and actions which, without it, are dry and barren. This is a heavenly wine which fortifies our hearts with a joy altogether divine. This is the balsam which heals our passions. It is also the tongue with which we speak to God, and without which our souls are dumb before him. It is this that draws down upon us the heavenly dew that strengthens our hearts, and is the spiritual nourishment which enables us to labour with fruit in the vineyard of the Lord."

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 4 :*

ST DOMINIC, founder of the Friars Preachers, a zealous fighter against the enemies of the Church : ST LUANUS, or LUGID, Abbot in Ireland, who, as St Bernard tells us, founded one hundred monasteries in Ireland and died on this day in 622.

## AUGUST 5

### ST OSWALD, KING AND MARTYR

THE English Saxon kingdom of the Northumbers was founded by Ida in 547. After his death the northern part, called Bernicia, was preserved by his children; but Deira, that is the southern part, comprising Yorkshire and Lancashire, was occupied by Ælla or Alla, and after his death was recovered by Ethelfrid, grandson of Ida, who ruled the whole kingdom of the Northumbers twenty-four years. He being slain in battle by Redwald, King of the East-Angles, in 617, his sons, Eanfrid, Oswald, and Oswi, took refuge among the Scots, where they were instructed in the Christian faith and received the sacrament of regeneration. In the meantime, Edwin, the son of Alla, reigned seventeen years over both kingdoms; but in 633 was killed fighting against the united forces of Penda the Mercian and Cadwalla, King of the Britons, or Welch, a Christian by profession, but a stranger to the maxims of his religion; in his manners a barbarian and an implacable enemy to the English Saxons. Upon this revolution the three sons of Ethelfrid returned from Scotland; and Eanfrid, the eldest, obtained the kingdom of the Deira, whilst Osric, cousin-german to Edwin, was chosen King of Bernicia. Both these princes loved the glory of men more than God, and apostatized from the faith which they had embraced; but were both slain the same year by Cadwalla—Osric in battle, and the other, soon after, by treachery. Hereupon Oswald was called to the crown, both of Deira and Bernicia, he being the son of Ethelfrid and nephew of Edwin, whose sister Acca was his mother. This prince had embraced the faith

<sup>1</sup> Barthol. de Martyr. in Stimulo Pastor. c. 4.

with his whole heart, and, far from forsaking Christ as his unhappy brothers had done to court the favour of his subjects, he had no other view than to bring them to the spiritual kingdom of divine grace and to labour with them to secure a crown of eternal glory.

At that time Cadwalla ravaged all the Northumbrian provinces, not as a conqueror but as a cruel tyrant, laying everything waste with fire and sword at the head of a vast army, which he boasted nothing could resist. Oswald assembled what troops he was able, and being fortified by faith in Christ, marched confidently, though with a small force, against this mighty enemy who had by that time proceeded as far as the Picts' wall. Oswald gave him battle at a place called by Bede Denis-burn, that is, the brook Denis, adjoining to the Picts' wall on the north side. Being come near the enemy's camp the evening before the engagement, the pious king caused a great wooden cross to be made in haste, and he held it up himself with both his hands whilst the hole dug in the earth to plant it in was filled up round the foot. When it was fixed, St Oswald cried out to his army, "Let us now kneel down and jointly pray to the omnipotent and only true God, that he would mercifully defend us from our proud enemy; for he knows that we fight in a just war in defence of our lives and country." All the soldiers did as he commanded them.<sup>1</sup> The place where this cross was set up was called in the English tongue Hevenfelth, that is, Heaven's field, by a happy omen, says Bede, because there was to be erected the first heavenly trophy of faith; for, before that time, no church or altar was known to have been raised in the whole kingdom of the Bernicians. This cross of St Oswald remained afterwards very famous. Bede tells us that to his time many cut little chips of it, which they steeped in water, which being drank by sick persons, or sprinkled upon them, many recovered their health. He adds that after the death of King Oswald the monks of Hexham used to come to the place on the day before the anniversary of his death, there to watch the night in prayer, reciting the office with many psalms for his soul, and the next morning to offer the victim of the holy oblation. A church was built on the spot some time before Bede wrote, who mentions that one of the monks of Hexham named Bothelm, then living, having broke his arm by falling on the ice as he was walking in the night and having suffered a long time much anguish from the hurt, was perfectly cured in one night by applying a little of the moss which was taken off from this cross and brought him. The learned Alcuin, in his poem on the bishops and saints of York, published by Mr Thomas Gale at Oxford,<sup>2</sup> relates how the pious king, no ways daunted at the multitude and ferocity of his enemies, encouraged his soldiers to a confidence in Christ, and exhorted them to implore his protection prostrate with him on their faces before the cross which he had set up. This author

<sup>1</sup> Bede, lib. iii. c. 2, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Gale, *Historiæ Anglic. Scriptor. t. ii.* Oxford, 1691.

likewise adds an account of several miracles wrought down to his time in 780 at the relics of St Oswald; and at this cross, or by chips cut from it, infused in water, by drinking which many sick were cured, even in Ireland and other distant countries. So great was the veneration of the people for this cross that the abbey of Durham used for its seal, during several ages, this cross on one side, and on the reverse the figure of St Oswald's head, as Mr Smith exhibits it from several ancient records. Almighty God was pleased to bless the king's faith and devotion by granting him and his small army a complete victory over Cadwalla, who was killed in the battle, and his forces, with those of his allies, entirely routed.

St Oswald, after giving thanks to God, immediately set himself to restore good order throughout his dominions, and to plant in them the faith of Christ. By his ambassadors he entreated the king and bishops in Scotland to send him a bishop and assistants, by whose preaching the people whom he governed might be grounded in the Christian religion and receive baptism. Aidan, a native of Ireland and a monk of the celebrated monastery of Hij, was chosen for the great and arduous undertaking; and by his mildness soon repaired the mischief done by another monk sent thither before him, whose harshness had alienated many from the sweet law of the gospel. The king bestowed on Aidan the isle of Lindisfarne for his episcopal seat; and was so edified with his learning and zeal that this great prince, before the bishop could sufficiently speak the English language, would be himself his interpreter and explain his sermons and instructions to the people.

Oswald filled his dominions with churches and monasteries, and whilst he was governing his temporal kingdom, was intent only to labour and pray for an eternal crown. He very often continued in prayer from the time of matins (at midnight, to which he rose with the monks) till daylight; and by reason of his frequent custom of praying or giving thanks to our Lord at all times, it is said that, wherever he was sitting, he would have his hands on his knees turned upwards towards heaven. Bede says that he reigned over Britons, Picts, Scots, and English.

Wonderful was the humility, affability, and charity of this great king amidst his prosperity; of which Bede gives us the following instance: One Easter-day, whilst he was sitting down to dinner, an officer whose business it was to take care of the poor came in and told him there was a great multitude of poor people at his gate desiring alms. Whereupon the king sent them a large silver dish full of meat from his own table, and ordered the dish to be broken into small pieces and distributed among them. Upon this, St Aidan, who happened to be at table, taking him by the right hand, said, "Let this hand never corrupt." Bede adds that this arm being cut off from his body after he was slain, remained uncorrupt till his time, and was then kept, being honoured by all with due veneration,

in the Church of St Peter at the royal castle of Bebbaborough (so called from Bebba, a former queen), now Bamborough, in Northumberland. Simon of Durham and Ingulphus testify that this arm was afterwards kept at Peterborough.

When St Oswald had reigned eight years in great prosperity, Penda, the barbarous pagan King of Mercia who nine years before had slain the pious King Edwin, uncle to St Oswald by his mother, but had been vanquished by our saint in the beginning of his reign, found means again to raise a great army and invade the Christian dominions of our holy king. St Oswald met him with an inferior force and was killed in the battle that was fought between them. When he saw himself surrounded with the arms of his enemies, he offered his prayers for the souls of his soldiers. Whence it became a proverb, "O God be merciful to their souls, said Oswald when he fell." He was slain in the thirty-eighth year of his age, of our Lord 642, on the 5th of August, in a place called Maserfield. This seems to have been at Winwick, in Lancashire, where is a well still called St Oswald's, which was formerly visited out of devotion; and that this territory was called Maserfelte appears from an old inscription in Winwick Church. Nevertheless Oswaldtry, that is Oswald's cross, a market town seven miles from Shrewsbury, is supposed by some to have also been formerly called Maserfelth; and Capgrave, Camden, and others think this the place where St Oswald was slain; for he might before this, say they, when he defeated Penda, have added that part of Shropshire to his kingdom. The famous Church of St Oswald there stands without the new gate. Leland, in his Itinerary, says it was once a monastery: this must have been in the Saxon times; but soon after the Norman conquest this Church of Oswaldtry, or Oswald's cross, was a parish, when it was given to the monastery of Shrewsbury, to which it afterwards belonged and was improper. See Tanner, in his monastic history, who says the town called Album monasterium, or Whiteminster, was not Oswaldtry but Whitchurch, which was once a monastery. The Church of Oswaldtry was probably so called from St Oswald's cross, of which it was probably possessed; but Winwick, in Maserfelth in Lancashire, more justly claims the honour of his martyrdom. The inhuman tyrant caused the saint's head and arms to be struck off and fixed on poles; but St Oswald's brother and successor, Oswi, took them away the year following, and carried the arms to his own royal palace and sent the head to Lindisfarne. The head was afterwards put in the same shrine with the body of St Cuthbert, and with it translated to Durham, as Malmesbury and others assure us. The rest of St Oswald's body was translated by his niece Osfrida, wife of Etheldred, King of Mercia, to the monastery of Bardney, in Lincolnshire. During the Danish irruptions these relics were removed, by the care of Edilred, King of the Mercians, to Gloucester, where Elfleda, Countess of

Mercia and daughter to King Alfred, built the Church of St Peter. The monument erected to St Oswald there is still to be seen in a chapel of this cathedral between two pillars; but part of the relics were translated to the abbey of St Winoc's Berg in Flanders, in 1221, and deposited there with great solemnity by Adam, Bishop of Terouanne. The barbarous king Penda, after he had slain five pious kings, Edwin, Oswald, Sigebert, Egric, and Annas, turned his arms against Oswi, who tried in vain to soften him by presents and the most favourable proposals. Seeing himself rejected by man, he turned his gifts into prayers and bound himself by vow, in case he should be victorious, to consecrate to God his daughter Enfleda, then only one year old, and give with her twelve portions of land (each of which was sufficient to maintain ten families) to build and endow monasteries. God heard his vow; and Oswi, with an inferior army, defeated and slew the tyrant near Loyden, now Leeds, in Yorkshire, in 655. The place of this battle was called Winwidfield, or Field of Victory; situated on the river Winuaed, now Aire. With Penda, who was then eighty years old, of which he had reigned thirty, fell thirty commanders of royal blood. See the Saxon Chronicle, ad an. 655. Bede, Hist. Angl. lib. iii. c. 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13; and Alcuin, Poem. de Pontificibus et Sanctis Eborac. published by Gale, t. ii.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 5 :*

ST AFRA and HER COMPANIONS, martyrs under Diocletian; Afra had been a public sinner, but, once converted, she confessed her sins every day and died steadfastly for the faith with her three maids, named DIGNA, EUNOMIA, and EYTROPIA, who also had been sinners but were baptized and saw her glorious death; they were burned alive with the mother of St Afra : THE DEDICATION OF ST MARY AD NIVES, one of the three parochial churches in Rome in which the Pope officiates on different festivals : ST MEMMIUS, in French MENGE, first Bishop and apostle of Chalons on the Marne : ST OSWALD, King and martyr, who assembled his troops against the tyrant Cadwalla and gave him battle, fixing first a great wooden cross. This cross became very famous afterwards for miracles.

## AUGUST 6

### THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

[Matt. xviii. ; Mark ix. ; Luke ix.]

OUR Divine Redeemer, in order to show us that the sufferings of his servants are usually intermingled with frequent spiritual comforts, and to give us a sensible demonstration of the truth of his promises of an eternal glory reserved for us in the world to come, was pleased to manifest a glimpse of his majesty in the mystery of his Transfiguration. Being in Galilee, about a year before his sacred passion, he chose to be witnesses of his glory the same three beloved disciples who were afterwards to be witnesses of his bloody agony in the garden, namely, St Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, SS. James and John. He took three, that their evidence might be unexceptionable; but he would not publicly discover his glory, to teach his followers to love the closest secrecy in all spiritual graces and favours.

All pretences contrary to this rule are suggested by blind self-love, not by the Spirit of God; they are a disguised pride and a dangerous illusion. Every true servant of God loves to be hidden and concealed; his motto in the divine gifts, even when he most ardently invites all creatures to magnify the Lord with him for all his unspeakable mercies, is "My secret to myself, my secret to myself."<sup>1</sup> He fears lest he should even be considered or thought of in what purely belongs to God alone. Jesus, therefore, would exhibit this miracle in retirement, and he led these three apostles to a retired mountain, as he was accustomed to repair often to some close solitude to pray. The tradition of the Christians in Palestine, of which St Cyril of Jerusalem, St John Damascen, and other ancient fathers are vouchers, assures us that this was Mount Thabor, which is exceedingly high and beautiful, and was anciently covered with green trees and shrubs and was very fruitful. It rises something like a sugar-loaf, in a vast plain in the middle of Galilee. This was the place in which the Man-God appeared in his glory. He was transfigured whilst at prayer, because it is usually in this heavenly commerce that the soul receives the dew of divine consolations and tastes how infinitely sweet and good God is to those who sincerely seek him. Many Christians indeed are strangers to this effect of that holy exercise, because they do not apply themselves to it with assiduity and fervour, or neglect to disengage their affections from creatures by perfect humility, self-denial, and mortification of the senses. Without a great purity of heart no man shall see God. A little birdlime entangles the feathers of a bird and holds down the strongest pinion from being able to raise the body in the air. So the least earthly dust clogs the wings of the soul, the least inordinate attachment to creatures is a weight which hinders the perfect union of her affections with God and the full flow of his graces upon her; but a Christian worthily disposed and fitted by the Holy Ghost to receive the spirit of prayer, by assiduity in that holy exercise purifies his love more and more, transforms his affections, and renders them more and more spiritual and heavenly. Of this the Transfiguration of our Divine Redeemer was, among other transcending prerogatives, a most noble and supereminent prototype.

Whilst Jesus prayed he suffered that glory which was always due to his sacred humility, and of which, for our sake, he deprived it, to diffuse a ray over his whole body. His face was altered and shone as the sun, and his garments became white as snow. By this glorious transfiguration of his flesh he has animated our hope that even our bodies will share with our immortal souls in the bliss which he has promised us, and will inherit his glory. Yes: this heavy lumpish flesh, these infirm corruptible bodies, at present so often subject to sickness, pain, and wants, will one day be raised from the dust glorified, impassable; no more liable to heat, cold.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxiv. 15.

diseases, torment, or tears; beautiful, transcending in lustre and brightness the sun and stars; endued with swiftness beyond that of light, and with strength equal to the angels; with the power of penetrating all bodies, as Christ did the stone of the sepulchre and the doors when shut; with dazzling glory, with unspeakable pleasure in every part or organ; in a word, with all the communicable gifts and qualities of spirits resembling the body of Christ glorified after his resurrection, which, as St Paul tells us, is the model upon which ours shall be raised in glory. A glimpse of all this appeared in the splendour wherewith his adorable humanity was clothed in his Transfiguration.

Moses and Elias were seen by the three apostles in his company on this occasion, and were heard discoursing with him of the death which he was to suffer in Jerusalem. Moses represented the ancient patriarchs and the first saints who lived under the law; Elias the later prophets; and they showed by their presence that all the just inspired by God from the beginning had given testimony to Christ as the true Messias. They had both been remarkable for their sufferings in the cause of virtue, Elias having been exceedingly persecuted by the wicked, and Moses having chosen rather to be afflicted with the people of God than to enjoy the greatest honours and pleasures of Pharaoh's court; and the cross being the constant object of the most ardent desires of our blessed Redeemer out of the excess of his love for us, they spoke to him of nothing but of the stripes, thorns, reproaches, and cruel death which he was to suffer. Our loving Saviour, in part to moderate his ardour to complete his sacrifice by the triumph of his love in his death on the cross, had made it frequently the subject of his conversation with his disciples, and even in this joyful mystery would entertain himself and the witnesses of his glory upon it. The three apostles were wonderfully delighted with this glorious vision, and St Peter cried out to Christ, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tents, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." This he spoke, not knowing what he said, being out of himself in a transport of holy admiration and joy; desiring never to be drawn from the sight of so glorious an object, and never to lose that sweetness and delight with which his soul was then overwhelmed. He truly knew not what he said, or he would never have desired that for the time of trial on earth which is reserved only for heaven. Neither would he have contented himself with beholding only the glorified humanity of Christ, which vision can bear no proportion to the beatific contemplation of the divinity itself. He tasted only a single drop of that overflowing river which inebriates the heavenly Jerusalem and all its blessed inhabitants; yet was so much transported by it. What would he then have said if he had received into his soul the whole impetuous torrent of heavenly delights? He who has once tasted that spiritual sweetness which God sometimes bestows on souls in this life

to strengthen their weakness, and to attract them to his love by the sweet odour of his ointments, must ever after live in bitterness, alleviated only by resignation and love, till he arrive at the fountain itself, which is God. No wonder, therefore, that St Peter, after this foretaste, was unwilling to return again to the earth. How little do the lovers of the world know the incomparable sweetness of divine love, or they would despise from their hearts those toys for which they deprive themselves of so great a good!

Whilst St Peter was speaking there came, on a sudden, a bright shining cloud from heaven, an emblem of the presence of God's majesty, and from out of this cloud was heard a voice which said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." By this testimony the Father declared Christ his only begotten and co-eternal Son, sent by him into the world to be the remedy of our sins, our advocate and our propitiation, through whom alone we can find access to his offended majesty. If through him we approach the throne of his mercy we cannot be rejected, he being in his humanity the object of the infinite complacency of the Father; through him we are invited to apply with confidence for mercy and every good gift. By the same voice the Father also declared him the perfect model of our virtues, and commands us to hear him and attend to his example in order to square by it our lives and to form in our souls a new spirit grounded upon the pattern he hath set us of humility, meekness, charity, and patience. He commands us also to listen with the utmost respect and docility to his saving and most holy doctrine, which is the word of eternal life. The apostles that were present, upon hearing this voice, were seized with a sudden fear and fell upon the ground; but Jesus, going to them, touched them and bade them to rise. They immediately did so, and saw no one but Jesus standing in his ordinary state. This vision happened in the night. As they went down the mountain early the next morning, Jesus gave them a charge not to discover to any one what they had seen till he should be risen from the dead. The Jews were unworthy to hear what many among them would have only blasphemed, and they had sufficient evidence by his miracles to which they wilfully shut their eyes; but Jesus would by this give us a fresh lesson of humility and teach us that secrecy with regard to divine graces and the exercise of all extraordinary virtues is the guardian of those gifts.

The ninety-fourth sermon of St Leo, which is on this mystery, shows this festival to have been observed at Rome in the middle of the fifth century. Pope Calixtus III made it more universal and solemn by a bull dated in 1457.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 6 :*

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD : ST JUATUS and ST PASTOR, martyrs, titular patrons of the Collegiate Church at Alcada : ST XYSTUS or SIXTUS II, Pope and martyr, a Grecian by birth and a deacon under St Stephen.



AUGUST 7

## ST CAJETAN OF THIENNA, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 1547)

[See his life, compiled by Antonio Caraccioli, Pr. of his Order, published in Latia, with those the three other founders, in 1612. Also the same given more at large in Italian, by F. Jos. Silos, of the same Order, on the occasion of his canonization in 1671, with the bull of his canonization, and the comments of the Bollandists. See also his life written by Del Tufa, Bishop of Acerra; Helyot. Hist. des Ord. Relig. t. iv. p. 71; Contin. Fleury, t. xxxii. et la Vie de St Cajetan de Thienne, par D. Bernard. Paris, 1698, 12mo.]

ST CAJETAN was son of Gaspar, Lord of Thienna, and Mary Porta, persons of the first rank among the nobility of the territory of Vicenza, in Lombardy, and eminent for their piety. The saint was born in 1480. His mother by earnest prayer recommended him from his birth to the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, and as he grew capable of instruction never ceased setting before his eyes the example of our divine Redeemer's humility, meekness, purity, and all other virtues; and such was his docility to her lessons that from his infancy he was surnamed the Saint. The perfect mortification of his passions from the cradle made an unalterable sweetness of temper seem, as it were, the natural result of his constitution. The love of prayer taught a constant recollection, and the continual application of his mind to eternal truths made him shun all loss of time in amusements or idle conversation; for no discourse seemed agreeable or interesting to him unless it tended to raise the mind to God. His affections were entirely weaned from the world, and he directed all his aims to the life to come.

To devote himself perfectly to the divine service he embraced an ecclesiastical state; and, out of his own patrimony, built and founded a parochial chapel at Rampazzo for the instruction and benefit of many who lived at a considerable distance from the parish church. After this he went to Rome, not in quest of preferment or to live at court, but hoping to lie concealed in that great city and to lead an obscure and hidden life, which it was impossible for him to do in his own country. Nevertheless Pope Julius II compelled him to accept the office of protonotary in his court, and by that means drew him out of his beloved solitude, though the saint had the art to join interior recollection with public employments and to live retired in courts. Being much delighted with the end proposed by the confraternity in Rome called the love of God, which was an association of zealous and devout persons who devoted themselves by certain pious exercises and regulations to labour with all their power to promote the divine honour, he enrolled himself in it. Upon the death of Julius II he resigned his public employment and returned to Vicenza. There he entered himself in the confraternity of St Jerom, which was instituted upon the plan of that of the love of God in Rome, but which in that place

consisted only of men in the lowest stations of life. This circumstance was infinitely pleasing to the saint but gave great offence to his worldly friends, who thought it a blemish to the honour of his family. He persisted, however, in his resolution, and exerted his zeal with wonderful fruit in the most humbling practices of charity. In obedience to the advice of his confessor, John of Crema, a Dominican friar, a man of great prudence, learning, and piety, the saint removed to Venice and, taking up his lodgings in the new hospital of that city, pursued his former manner of life.

By the advice of the same director, Cajetan left Venice to return to Rome, in order to associate himself again to the confraternity of the love of God, among the principal members of which many were no less eminent for their learning and prudence than for their extraordinary piety. He deliberated with them on some effectual means for the reformation of manners among Christians, grieving that the sanctity of this divine religion should be so little known and practised by the greatest part of those that profess it. All agreed that this could not be done but by reviving in the clergy the spirit and zeal of those holy pastors who first planted the faith. To put all the clergy in mind what this spirit ought to be and what it obliges them to, a plan was concerted among the associates for instituting an order of regular clergy upon the perfect model of the lives of the apostles. The first authors of this design were St Cajetan; John Peter Caraffa, afterwards pope under the name of Paul IV, but at that time Archbishop of Theate, now called Chietie, a town in Abruzzo; Paul Consigliari, of the most noble family of Ghisleri; and Boniface de Colle, a gentleman of Milan. Those among them who were possessed of ecclesiastical livings addressed themselves to Pope Clement VII for leave to resign them, with a view of making such an establishemnt. His holiness made great difficulties with regard to the archbishop, but at length gave his consent. The plan of the new institute was drawn up, laid before the pope, and examined in a consistory of cardinals in 1524. The more perfectly to extirpate the poison of avarice, always most fatal to the ecclesiastical order where it gets footing, and to establish in the hearts of those that are engaged in that state the most perfect spirit of disinterestedness and the entire disengagement of their hearts from the goods of this world, the zealous founders made it an observance of their institute, though not under any vow or obligation (as several French writers of note have mistaken), that this regular clergy should not only possess no annual revenues, but should be forbid ever to beg or ask for necessary subsistence, content to receive the voluntary contributions of the faithful and relying entirely upon providence. The cardinals objected a long time to this rule, thinking it inconsistent with the ordinary laws of prudence. But their opposition was at length overcome by the founders, who urged that Christ and his apostles having

observed this manner of life, the same might be perfectly copied by those who were their successors in the ministry of the altar and of the divine word. But this clause was added to the rule, that if a community should be reduced to extreme necessity, they should give notice of their distress by a toll of the bell. The Order therefore was approved by Clement VII in 1524, and Caraffa was chosen the first general. As he still retained the title of Archbishop of Theate, these regular clerks were from him called Theatins. The principal ends which they proposed to themselves were, to preach to the people, assist the sick, oppose errors in faith, restore among the laity the devout and frequent use of the sacraments, and re-establish in the clergy disinterestedness, regularity, a perfect spirit of devotion, assiduous application to the sacred studies, the most religious respect to holy things, especially in whatever belongs to the sacraments and pious ceremonies.

Rome and all Italy soon perceived the happy effects of the zeal of these holy men, and the odour of their sanctity drew many to their community. They lived at first in a house in Rome which belonged to Boniface de Colle; but, their number increasing, they took a larger house on Monte Pincio. In the following year they were afflicted with a calamity which had like to have put an end to their Order soon after its birth. The army of the Emperor Charles V, which was commanded by the Constable Bourbon, who had deserted from the French king to the emperor, marched from the Milanese to Rome and took that city by assault on the 6th of May 1527. This Duke of Bourbon, after having committed horrible outrages, was killed by a musket shot in mounting the wall. But Philibert of Challons, Prince of Orange, took upon him the command of the army, which was composed in a great measure of Lutherans and other enemies of the See of Rome. The pope and cardinals retired into the Castle of St Angelo, but the German army plundered the city and were guilty of greater cruelties and excesses than had been committed by the Goths a thousand years before. The house of the Theatins was rifled and almost demolished; and a soldier who had known St Cajetan at Vicenza before he renounced the world, falsely imagining he was then rich, gave an information to his officer against him to that effect; whereupon he was barbarously scourged and tortured to extort from him a treasure which he had not. Being at length discharged, though in a weak and maimed condition, he and his companions left Rome with nothing but their breviaries under their arms and with clothes barely to cover themselves. They repaired to Venice, where they were kindly received and settled in the convent of St Nicholas of Tolentino. Caraffa's term for discharging the office of general expired after three years, in 1530, and St Cajetan was chosen in his room. It was with great reluctance that he accepted that charge, but the sanctity, zeal, and prudence with which he laboured

to advance the divine honour, especially by inspiring ecclesiastics with fervour and the contempt of the world, drew the esteem of the whole world on his Order. The fruits of his charity were most conspicuous during a raging plague, which was brought to Venice from the Levant and followed by a dreadful famine. Excited by his example, Jerom Emiliani, a noble Venetian, in 1530 founded another congregation of regular clerks, called Somasches, from the place where they lived between Milan and Bergamo, the design of which was to breed up orphans and such children as were destitute of the means of a suitable education.

At the end of the three years of Cajetan's office, Caraffa was made general a second time, and our saint was sent to Verona where both the clergy and laity were in the greatest ferment, tumultuously opposing certain articles of reformation of discipline which their bishop was endeavouring to introduce among them. The saint in a short time restored the public tranquillity and brought the people unanimously and cheerfully to submit to a wholesome reformation, of which they themselves would reap all the advantages. Shortly after, he was called to Naples to found a convent of his Order in that city. The Count of Oppido bestowed on him a convenient large house for that purpose, and used the most pressing importunities to prevail upon him to accept a donation of an estate in lands: but this the saint constantly refused. A general reformation of manners at Naples, both in the clergy and laity, was the fruit of his example, preaching, and indefatigable labours. No occupations made him deprive himself of the comfort and succour of his daily long exercises of holy prayer, which he sometimes continued for six or seven hours together and in which he was often favoured with extraordinary raptures. In 1534 Caraffa was created cardinal by Paul III, Clement the VIIth's successor. He was afterwards raised to the papacy upon the death of Marcellus II in 1555, and died in 1559. Our saint was then gone to receive the recompense of his labours. In 1537 he went back to Venice, being made general a second time; but, after his three years were expired, returned to Naples and governed the house of his Order in that city till his happy death. Being worn out by austerities, labours, and a lingering distemper, he at length perceived his last hour to approach. When his physicians advised him not to lie on the hard boards, but to use a coarse bed in his sickness, his answer was: "My Saviour died on a cross, suffer me at least to die on ashes." His importunity prevailing, he was laid on a sackcloth spread on the floor and strewed with ashes; and in that penitential posture he received the last sacraments, and calmly expired in the greatest sentiments of compunction on the 7th of August 1547. Many miracles wrought by his intercession were approved at Rome after a rigorous scrutiny, a history of which is published by Pinius the Bollanist. St Cajetan was beatified

by Urban VIII in 1629, and canonized by Clement X in 1671. His remains are enshrined in the Church of St Paul at Naples.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 7 :*

ST CAJETAN, founder of the Theatines, active in reformation of ecclesiastical discipline : ST DONATUS, Bishop, and ST HILARINUS, martyrs, the former Bishop of Abrezzo and the latter a monk who was beaten to death with clubs ; St Donatus, illustrious for sanctity and for miracles, was killed by the sword after being greatly tormented.

## AUGUST 8

### SS. CYRIACUS, LARGUS, SMARAGDUS, AND THEIR COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

(A.D. 303)

ST CYRIACUS was a holy deacon at Rome under the popes Marcellinus and Marcellus. In the persecution of Diocletian, in 303, he was crowned with a glorious martyrdom in that city. With him suffered also Largus and Smaragdus and twenty others, among whom are named Crescentianus, Sergius, Secundus, Alban, Victorianus, Faustinus, Felix, Sylvanus, and four women, Memmia, Juliana, Cyriacides, and Donata. Their bodies were first buried near the place of their execution on the Salarian way; but were soon after translated into a farm of the devout Lady Lucina, on the Ostian road, on this eighth day of August, as is recorded in the ancient Liberian Calendar and others.

To honour the martyrs and duly celebrate their festivals, we must learn their spirit and study to imitate them according to the circumstances of our state. We must, like them, resist evil unto blood, must subdue our passions, suffer afflictions with patience, and bear with others without murmuring or complaining. Many practice voluntary austerities cheerfully, only because they are of their own choice. But true patience requires, in the first place, that we bear all afflictions and contradictions from whatever quarter they come; and in this consists true virtue. Though we pray for heaven our prayers will not avail unless we make use of the means which God sends to bring us thither. The cross is the ladder by which we must ascend.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 8 :*

ST CYRIACUS, ST LARGUS, ST SMARAGDUS, and other martyrs in 303 : ST HORMISDAS, martyred in Persia : BLESSED JOHN FELTON and BLESSED THOMAS FELTON, Franciscans, martyrs under Henry VIII, beatified 15th December, 1929.

## AUGUST 9

### ST ROMANUS, MARTYR

(A.D. 258)

HE was a soldier in Rome at the time of the martyrdom of St Laurence. Seeing the joy and constancy with which that holy martyr suffered his

torments, he was moved to embrace the faith, and addressing himself to St Laurence was instructed and baptized by him in prison. Confessing aloud what he had done, he was arraigned, condemned, and beheaded the day before the martyrdom of St Laurence. Thus he arrived at his crown before his guide and master. The body of St Romanus was first buried on the road to Tibur, but his remains were translated to Lucca, where they are kept under the high altar of a beautiful church which bears his name. St Romanus is mentioned on this day in the Antiphony of St Gregory and in ancient Martyrologies.

The example of the martyrs and other primitive saints, by the powerful grace of God, had not less force in converting infidels than the most evident miracles. St Justin observed to the heathens that many of them by living among Christians, and seeing their virtue if they did not embrace the faith, at least were worked into a change of manners, were become meek and affable, from being overbearing, violent, and passionate; and by seeing the patience, constancy, and contempt of the world which the Christians practised, had learned themselves some degree of those virtues.<sup>1</sup> Thus are we bound to glorify God by our lives, and Christ commands that our good works shine before men. St Clement of Alexandria<sup>2</sup> tells us that it was the usual saying of the apostle St Matthias, "The faithful sins if his neighbour sins." Such ought to be the zeal of everyone to instruct and edify his neighbour by word and example. But woe to us on whose hearts no edifying examples or instructions, even of saints, make any impression! And still a more dreadful woe to us who by our lukewarmness and scandalous lives are to others an odour, not of life, but of death, and draw the reproaches of infidels on our holy religion and its divine author!

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 9 :*

ST FEDLIMID or FELIMY, Bishop of Kilmore, lived in the sixth century : ST JOHN BAPTIST VIANNEY, known as The Cure D'Ars : ST NATHY or DAVID, priest in Ireland, patron of the diocese of Achonry : and ST ROMANUS, martyr, a soldier in Rome at the time of the martyrdom of St Laurence.

AUGUST 10

ST LAURENCE, MARTYR

(A.D. 258)

THERE are few martyrs in the church whose names are so famous as that of the glorious St Laurence, in whose praises the most illustrious among the Latin fathers have exerted their eloquence, and whose triumph, to use the words of St Maximus, the whole church joins in a body to honour with universal joy and devotion. The ancient fathers make no mention of his birth or education, but the Spaniards call him their countryman.

<sup>1</sup> St Justin, Apol. 1 (ol. 2), p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Strom. lib. i. p. 748.

His extraordinary virtue in his youth recommended him to St Xystus, then archdeacon of Rome, who took him under his protection, and would be himself his instructor in the study of the holy scriptures and in the maxims of Christian perfection. St Xystus being raised to the pontificate in 257, he ordained Laurence deacon; and though he was yet young, appointed him the first among the seven deacons who served in the Roman Church; hence by several fathers he is called the pope's archdeacon. This was a charge of great trust to which was annexed the care of the treasury and riches of the church and the distribution of its revenues among the poor. How faithful and disinterested our holy deacon was in the discharge of this important and difficult office appears from the sequel.

The Emperor Valerian, through the persuasion of Macrian, in 257, published his bloody edicts against the church, which he foolishly flattered himself he was able to destroy, not knowing it to be the work of the Almighty. That by cutting off the shepherds he might disperse the flocks, he commanded all bishops, priests, and deacons to be put to death without delay. The holy pope, St Xystus, the second of that name, was apprehended the year following. As he was led to execution, his deacon, St Laurence, followed him weeping; and judging himself ill-treated because he was not to die with him, said to him, "Father, where are you going without your son? Whither are you going, O holy priest, without your deacon? You were never wont to offer sacrifice without me, your minister. Wherein have I displeased you? Have you found me wanting to my duty? Try me now, and see whether you have made choice of an unfit minister for dispensing the blood of the Lord." He could not, without an holy envy, behold his bishop go to martyrdom and himself left behind; and being inflamed with a desire to die for Christ, he burst into this complaint. The holy pope, at the sight of his grief, was moved to tenderness and compassion, and comforting him, he answered, "I do not leave you, my son; but a greater trial and a more glorious victory are reserved for you, who are stout and in the vigour of youth. We are spared on account of our weakness and old age. You shall follow me in three days." He added a charge to distribute immediately among the poor the treasures of the church, which were committed to his care, lest the poor should be robbed of their patrimony if it should fall into the hands of the persecutors. Laurence was full of joy, hearing that he should be so soon called to God, set out immediately to seek all the poor widows and orphans and gave among them all the money which he had in his hands; he even sold the sacred vessels to increase the sum, employing it all in the like manner. The church at Rome was then possessed of considerable riches. For, besides the necessary provision of its ministers, it maintained many widows and virgins and fifteen hundred poor people, of whose names the bishop or his archdeacon kept the list; and it often sent large alms into

distant countries. It had likewise very rich ornaments and vessels for the celebration of the divine mysteries, as appears from Tertullian and the profane heathen scoffer Lucian.

The prefect of Rome was informed of these riches, and imagining that the Christians had hid considerable treasures, he was extremely desirous to secure them: for he was no less a worshipper of gold and silver than of Jupiter and Mars. With this view he sent for St Laurence, to whose care these treasures were committed. As soon as he appeared he said to him, according to Prudentius, "You often complain that we treat you with cruelty; but no tortures are here thought of; I only inquire mildly after what concerns you. I am informed that your priests offer in gold, that the sacred blood is received in silver cups, and that in your nocturnal sacrifices you have wax tapers fixed in golden candlesticks. Bring to light these concealed treasures; the prince has need of them for the maintenance of his forces. I am told that, according to your doctrine, you must render to Cæsar the things that belong to him. I do not think that your God causeth money to be coined; he brought none into the world with him; he only brought words. Give us therefore the money, and be rich in words." St Laurence replied, without showing any concern, "The church is indeed rich; nor hath the emperor any treasure equal to what it possesseth. I will show you a valuable part; but allow me a little time to set everything in order and to make an inventory." The prefect did not understand of what treasure Laurence spoke, but imagining himself already possessed of hidden wealth, was satisfied with this answer and granted him three days' respite. During this interval, Laurence went all over the city, seeking out in every street the poor who were supported by the church, and with whom no other was so well acquainted. On the third day he gathered together a great number of them before the church and placed them in rows: the decrepit, the blind, the lame, the maimed, the lepers, orphans, widows, and virgins; then he went to the prefect, invited him to come and see the treasure of the church and conducted him to the place. The prefect, astonished to see such a number of poor wretches who made a horrid sight, turned to the holy deacon with looks full of disorder and threatenings and asked him what all this meant and where the treasures were which he had promised to show him. St Laurence answered, "What are you displeased at? Behold in these poor persons the treasures which I promised to show you; to which I will add pearls and precious stones—those widows and consecrated virgins, which are the church's crown, by which it is pleasing to Christ; it hath no other riches; make use then of them for the advantage of Rome, of the emperor, and yourself." Thus he exhorted him as Daniel did Nabuchodonosor, to redeem his sins by sincere repentance and alms-deeds, and showed him where the church placed its treasure. The earthly-



mind man was far from forming so noble an idea of an object, the sight of which offended his carnal eyes, and he cried out in a transport of rage, "Do you thus mock me? Is it thus that the axes and the fasces, the sacred ensigns of the Roman power, are insulted? I know that you desire to die; that is your frenzy and vanity: but you shall not die immediately as you imagine. I will protract your tortures, that your death may be the more bitter as it shall be slower. You shall die by inches." Then he caused a great gridiron to be made ready, and live coals almost extinguished to be thrown under it that the martyr might be slowly burnt. Laurence was stripped, extended, and bound with chains upon this iron bed over a slow fire, which broiled his flesh by little and little, piercing at length to his very bowels. His face appeared to the Christians newly baptized to be surrounded with a beautiful extraordinary light, and his broiled body to exhale a sweet agreeable smell; but the unbelievers neither saw this light nor perceived this smell. The martyr felt not the torments of the persecutor, says St Austin, so vehement was his desire of possessing Christ: and St Ambrose observes that whilst his body broiled in the material flames, the fire of divine love, which was far more active within his breast, made him regardless of the pain: having the law of God before his eyes, he esteemed his torments to be a refreshment and a comfort. Such was the tranquillity and peace of mind which he enjoyed amidst his torments that, having suffered a long time, he turned to the judge and said to him with a cheerful and smiling countenance, "Let my body be now turned; one side is broiled enough." When, by the prefect's order, the executioner had turned him, he said, "It is dressed enough, you may eat." The prefect insulted him, but the martyr continued in earnest prayer, with sighs and tears imploring the divine mercy with his last breath for the conversion of the city of Rome. This he begged Christ speedily to accomplish, who had subjected the world to this city, that his faith might, by triumphing one day in it, more easily spread itself from the head over all the provinces or members of its empire. This grace he asked of God for that city for the sake of the two apostles, St Peter and St Paul, who had there begun to plant the cross of Christ and had watered that city with their blood. The saint having finished his prayer, and completed his holocaust, lifting up his eyes towards heaven, gave up the ghost.

Prudentius doubts not to ascribe to his prayer the entire conversion of Rome, and says God began to grant his request at the very time he put it up; for several senators, who were present at his death, were so powerfully moved by his tender and heroic fortitude and piety that they became Christians upon the spot. These noblemen took up the martyr's body on their shoulders and gave it an honourable burial in the Veran field, near the road to Tibur, on the 10th of August in 258. His death, says Prudentius, was the death of idolatry in Rome, which from that time

began more sensibly to decline; and now, adds the same father, the senate itself venerates the tombs of the apostles and martyrs. He describes with what devotion and fervour the Romans frequented the Church of St Laurence and commended themselves in all their necessities to his patronage; and the happy success of their prayers proves how great his power is with God. The poet implores the mercy of Christ for himself and begs he may obtain, by the prayers of the martyrs, what his own cannot. St Austin assures us that God wrought in Rome an incredible number of miracles through the intercession of St Laurence.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 10 :*

ST BLAAN of Ireland, a disciple of St Congall, afterwards Bishop among the Picts in Scotland, died about 446 : ST DEUSDEDIT, a poor labouring man who distributed to the poor every Saturday all he could save from what he earned in the week : ST LAURENCE, one of the most glorious martyrs in the Church, a deacon of Pope St Sixtus ; he was slowly roasted to death on a gridiron.

AUGUST 11

ST TIBURTIUS, MARTYR, AND ST CHROMATIUS,  
CONFESSOR  
(A.D. 286)

[Abridged from the Acts of St Sebastian.]

AGRESTIUS CHROMATIUS was vicar to the prefect of Rome, and had condemned several martyrs in the reign of Carinus; and in the first years of Diocletian, St Tranquillinus, being brought before him, assured him that having been afflicted with the gout, he had recovered a perfect state of health by being baptized. Chromatius was troubled with the same distemper, and being convinced by this miracle of the truth of the gospel, sent for Polycarp, the priest who had baptized Tranquillinus, and receiving the sacrament of baptism, was freed from that corporeal infirmity, by which miracle God was pleased to give him a sensible emblem of the spiritual health which that holy laver conferred on his soul. From that time he harboured many Christians in his house, to shelter them from the persecution, and resigned his dignity, in which he was succeeded by one Fabian. Chromatius's son Tiburtius was ordained subdeacon, and was soon after betrayed to the persecutors, condemned by Fabian to many torments, and at length beheaded on the Lavican road, three miles from Rome, where a church was afterwards built. He is mentioned in several ancient Martyrologies with his father Chromatius, who retiring into the country, lived there concealed, in the fervent practice of all Christian virtues.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 11 :*

ST EQUITIUS, Abbot, troubled in his youth with violent temptations of the flesh but freed from that domestic enemy by his opposition of prayer and austerities : ST GERY or GAUGERICUS, Bishop, a native of Yvois in Luxembourg, raised to the episcopal chair of Cambrai and Arras, which sees were united until 1093 : ST SUSANNA, said to have been a niece of Pope Caius ; she suffered martyrdom with heroic constancy : ST TIBURTIUS, martyr, and ST CHROMATIUS, his father, who harboured many Christians in his house after his conversion.

AUGUST 12

## ST CLARE, VIRGIN, ABBESS

(A.D. 1253)

[From her authentic life, written soon after her death, by order of Pope Alexander IV, who had pronounced her funeral panegyric whilst Cardinal of Ostia, and who canonized her two years after. See also the annals of the Franciscan Order, compiled by the learned F. Luke Wading; her life published in English; F. Sbarala, &c.]

ST CLARE was daughter to Phavorino Sciffo, a noble knight who had distinguished himself in the wars, and his virtuous spouse called Hortulana. These illustrious personages, who held the first rank at Assisium for their birth and riches, were still more eminent for their extraordinary piety. They had three daughters, Clare, Agnes, and Beatrice. St Clare was born in 1193 at Assisium, a city in Italy built on a stony mountain called Assi; from her infancy she was extremely charitable and devout. It was her custom to count her task of Paters and Aves by a certain number of little stones in her lap, in imitation of some ancient anchorets in the East. Her parents began to talk to her very early of marriage, which gave her great affliction; for it was her most ardent desire to have no other spouse but Jesus Christ. Hearing the great reputation of St Francis, who set an example of perfection to the whole city, she found means to be conducted to him by a pious matron and begged his instruction and advice. He spoke to her on the contempt of the world, the shortness of life, and the love of God and heavenly things in such a manner as warmed her tender breast; and upon the spot she formed a resolution of renouncing the world. St Francis appointed Palm Sunday for the day on which she should come to him. On that day Clare, dressed in her most sumptuous apparel, went with her mother and family to the divine office; but when all the rest went up to the altar to receive a palm-branch, bashfulness and modesty kept her in her place; which the bishop seeing, he went from the altar down to her and gave her the palm. She attended the procession; but the evening following it, being the 18th of March 1212, she made her escape from home, accompanied with another devout young woman, and went a mile out of the town to the Portiuncula, where St Francis lived with his little community. He and his religious brethren met her at the door of their church of our Lady with lighted tapers in their hands, singing the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*. Before the altar of the Blessed Virgin she put off her fine clothes, and St Francis cut off her hair and gave her his penitential habit, which was no other than a piece of sackcloth tied about her with a cord. The holy father, not having yet any nunnery of his own, placed her for the present in the Benedictin nunnery of St Paul, where she was affectionately received, being then eighteen years of age. The Poor Clares date from this epoch the foundation of their Order.

No sooner was this action of the holy virgin made public but the world conspired unanimously to condemn it, and her friends and relations came in a body to draw her out of her retreat. Clare resisted their violence and held the altar so fast as to pull the holy cloths half off it when they endeavoured to drag her away; and, uncovering her head to show her hair cut, she said that Christ had called her to his service, and that she would have no other spouse of her soul; and that the more they should continue to persecute her the more God would strengthen her to resist and overcome them. They reproached her that by embracing so poor and mean a life she disgraced her family; but she bore their insults, and God triumphed in her. St Francis soon after removed her to another nunnery, that of St Angelo of Panso, near Assisium, which was also of St Bennet's Order. There her sister Agnes joined her in her undertaking; which drew on them both a fresh persecution, and twelve men abused Agnes both with words and blows and dragged her on the ground to the door, whilst she cried out, "Help me, sister; permit me not to be separated from our Lord Jesus Christ, and your loving company." Her constancy proved at last victorious and St Francis gave her also the habit, though she was only fourteen years of age. He placed them in a new mean house, contiguous to the Church of St Damian, situated on the skirts of the city Assisium, and appointed Clare the superior. She was soon after joined by her mother, Hortulana, and several ladies of her kindred and others, to the number of sixteen, among whom three were of the illustrious family of the Ubaldini in Florence. Many noble princesses held for truer greatness the sackcloth and poverty of St Clare than the estates, delights, and riches which they possessed, seeing they left them all to become humble disciples of so holy and admirable a mistress. St Clare founded, within a few years, monasteries at Perugia, Arezzo, Padua, that of SS. Cosmas and Damian in Rome; at Venice, Mantua, Bologna, Spoleto, Milan, Sienna, Pisa, &c., also at many principal towns in Germany. Agnes, daughter to the King of Bohemia, founded a nunnery of her Order in Prague, in which herself took the habit.

St Clare and her community practised austerities which till then had scarce ever been known among the tender sex. They wore neither stockings, shoes, sandals, nor any other covering on their feet; they lay on the ground, observed a perpetual abstinence, and never spoke but when they were obliged to it by the indispensable duties of necessity and charity. The foundress, in her rule, extremely recommends this holy silence as the means to retrench innumerable sins of the tongue and to preserve the mind always recollected in God and free from the dissipation of the world, which without this guard penetrates the walls of cloisters. Not content with the four Lents and the other general mortifications of her rule, she always wore next her skin a rough shift of horsehair or of

hogs' bristles cut short; she fasted church vigils and all Lent on bread and water; and from the 11th of November to Christmas-day, and during these times, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, ate nothing at all. She sometimes strewed the ground on which she lay with twigs, having a block for her bolster. Her disciplines, watchings, and other austerities were incredible, especially in a person of so tender a constitution. Being reduced to great weakness and to a very sickly state of health, St Francis and the Bishop of Assisium obliged her to lie upon a little chaff and never pass one day without taking at least some bread for nourishment. Under her greatest corporeal austerities her countenance was always mild and cheerful, demonstrating that true love makes penance sweet and easy. Her esteem of holy poverty was most admirable. She looked upon it as the retrenchment of the most dangerous objects of the passions and self-love, and as the great school of patience and mortification, by the perpetual inconveniences and sufferings which it lays persons under, and which the spirit of Christ crucified teaches us to bear with patience and joy.

St Francis instituted that his Order should never possess any rents even in common, subsisting on daily contributions. St Clare possessed this spirit in such perfection that when her large fortune fell to her by the death of her father, after her profession, she gave the whole to the poor, without reserving one single farthing for the monastery. Pope Gregory IX desired to mitigate this part of her rule and offered to settle a yearly revenue on her monastery of St Damian's; but she, in the most pressing manner, persuaded him by many reasons, in which her love of evangelical poverty made her eloquent, to leave her Order in its first rigorous establishment. Whilst others asked riches, Clare presented again her most humble request to Pope Innocent IV that he would confirm to her Order the singular privilege of holy poverty, which he did, in 1251, by a bull written with his own hand, which he watered at the same time with tears of devotion. So dear was poverty to St Clare, chiefly for her great love of humility. Though superior, she would never allow herself any privilege or distinction. It was her highest ambition to be the servant of servants, always beneath all, washing the feet of the lay-sisters, and kissing them when they returned from begging, serving at table, attending the sick, and removing the most loathsome filth. When she prayed for the sick she sent them to her other sisters, that their miraculous recovery might not be imputed to her prayers or merits. She was so true a daughter of obedience that she had always, as it were, wings to fly wherever St Francis directed her, and was always ready to execute anything, or to put her shoulders under any burden that was enjoined her; she was so crucified to her own will as to seem entirely divested of it. This she expressed to her holy father as follows: "Dispose of me as you please; I am yours by having consecrated my will to God. It is no longer my own."

Prayer was her spiritual comfort and strength, and she seemed scarce ever to interrupt that holy exercise. She often prostrated herself on the ground, kissed it, and watered it with many tears. Whilst her sisters took their rest she watched long in prayer, and was always the first that rose, rung the bell in the choir, and lighted the candles. She came from prayer with her face so bright and inflamed (like that of Moses descending from conversing with God) that it often dazzled the eyes of those that beheld her; and everyone perceived, by her words, that she came from her devotions; for she spoke with such a spirit and fervour as enkindled a flame in all who did but hear her voice, and diffused into their souls a great esteem of heavenly things. She communicated very often, and had a wonderful devotion towards the blessed Sacrament. Even when she was sick in bed she spun with her own hands fine linen for corporals and for the service of the altar, which she distributed through all the churches of Assisium. In prayer she was often so absorbed in divine love as to forget herself and her corporeal necessities. She, on many occasions, experienced the all-powerful force and efficacy of her holy prayer.

St Francis was affected with the most singular and tender devotion towards the mysteries of Christ's nativity and sacred passion. He used to assemble incredible numbers of the people to pass the whole Christmas night in the church in fervent prayer; and at midnight once preached with such fervour and tenderness that he was not able to pronounce the name Jesus, but called him the little child of Bethlehem; and in repeating these words always melted away with tender love. St Clare inherited this same devotion and tenderness to this holy mystery, and received many special favours from God in her prayers on that festival. As to the passion of Christ, St Francis called it his perpetual book and said he never desired to open any other but the history of it in the gospels, though he were to live to the world's end. The like were the sentiments of St Clare towards it; nor could she call to mind this adorable mystery without streams of tears and the warmest emotions of tender love. In sickness particularly it was her constant entertainment. She was afflicted with continual diseases and pains for eight-and-twenty years, yet was always joyful, allowing herself no other indulgence than a little straw to lie on. Reginald, Cardinal of Ostia, afterwards Pope Alexander IV, both visited her and wrote to her in the most humble manner. Pope Innocent IV paid her a visit a little before her death, going from Perugia to Assisium on purpose, and conferring with her a long time on spiritual matters with wonderful comfort.

St Clare bore her sickness and great pains without so much as speaking of them, and when Brother Reginald exhorted her to patience, she said, "How much am I obliged to my sweet Redeemer! for since, by means of his servant Francis, I have tasted the bitterness of his holy passion, I have never in my whole life found any pain or sickness that could afflict

me. There is nothing insupportable to a heart that loveth God; and to him that loveth not, everything is insupportable." Agnes, seeing her dear sister and spiritual mother draw near her end, besought her, with great affection and many tears, that she would take her along with her and not leave her here on earth, seeing they had been such faithful companions and so united in the same spirit and desire of serving our Lord. The holy virgin comforted her, telling her it was the will of God she should not at present go along with her; but bade her be assured she should shortly come to her, and so it happened. St Clare, seeing all her spiritual children weep, comforted them, and tenderly exhorted them to be constant lovers and faithful observers of holy poverty, and gave them her blessing, calling herself the little plant of her holy father St Francis. The passion of Christ, at her request, was read to her in her agony, and she sweetly expired amidst the prayers and tears of her community on the 11th of August 1253, in the forty-second year after her religious profession and the sixtieth of her age. She was buried on the day following, on which the church keeps her festival. Pope Innocent IV came again from Perugia and assisted in person with the sacred college at her funeral. Alexander IV canonized her at Anagnia in 1255. Her body was first buried at St Damian's; but the pope ordered a new monastery to be built for her nuns at the Church of St George within the walls, which was finished in 1260, when her relics were translated thither with great pomp. A new church was built here afterwards which bears her name; in which, in 1265, Pope Clement V consecrated the high altar under her name, and her body lies under it. The body of St Francis had lain in this Church of St George four years when, in 1230, it was removed to that erected in his honour, in which it still remains. Camden remarks that the family name Sinclair among us is derived from St Clare.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 12 :*

ST CLARE, virgin and Abbess. St Francis gave her the habit when she was only eighteen years old, but at that early age she showed herself steadfast in the spiritual life : ST EUPLIUS, martyred in Sicily in 304 : ST MUREDACH, first Bishop of Killala, appointed by St Patrick about 440 : and BLESSED THOMAS PERCY, Earl of Northumberland, martyr.

### AUGUST 13

### ST HIPPOLYTUS, MARTYR

(A.D. 252)

[From Prudent. hymn 11 ; De Cor. ed. a P. Chamillard, in usum Delphini, p. 278.]

ONE of the most illustrious martyrs who suffered in the reign of Gallus was St Hippolytus, one of the twenty-five priests of Rome, who had the misfortune for some time to have been deceived by the hypocrisy of Novatian and Novatus, and to have been engaged in their schism; but this fault

he expiated by his public repentance and a glorious martyrdom. He was apprehended and interrogated on the rack in Rome; but the prefect of the city, having filled it with Christian blood, went to Ostia to extend the persecution in those parts of the country and ordered our saint and several other Christians, who were then in prison at Rome, to be conducted thither after him. St Hippolytus being brought out of prison, many of those who had been under his care came to beg his last advice and blessing as he was going to martyrdom; and he vehemently exhorted them to preserve the unity of the church. "Fly," said he, "from the unhappy Novatus, and return to the Catholic Church. Adhere to the only faith which subsists from the beginning, which was preached by Paul, and is maintained by the chair of Peter. I now see things in a different light, and repent of what I once taught." After he had thus undeceived his flock and earnestly recommended to all the unity of holy faith, he was conducted to Ostia. The prefect, who was gone before the prisoners the same day, as soon as they arrived ascended his tribunal, surrounded with his executioners and various instruments of torture. The confessors were ranged in several companies before him, and by their emaciated faces, the length of their hair, and the filth with which they were covered, showed how much they had suffered by their long imprisonment. The judge, finding that he was not able to prevail with any of them by torments, at length condemned them all to be put to death. Some he caused to be beheaded, others to be crucified, others burnt, and some to be put out to sea in rotten vessels, which immediately foundered. When the venerable old man Hippolytus was in his turn brought to him loaded with chains, a crowd of young people cried out to the judge that he was a chief among the Christians, and ought to be put to death by some new and remarkable kind of punishment. "What is his name?" said the prefect. They answered, "Hippolytus." The prefect said, "Then let him be treated like Hippolytus, and dragged by wild horses." By this sentence he alluded to Hippolytus, the son of Theseus, who, flying from the indignation of his father, met a monster, the sight of which affrighted his horses so that he fell from his chariot and, being entangled in the harness, was dragged along and torn to pieces.<sup>1</sup> No sooner was the order given but the people set themselves to work in assisting the executioners. Out of the country where untamed horses were kept they took a pair of the most furious and unruly they could meet with, and tied a long rope between them instead of a pole, to which they fastened the martyr's feet. Then they provoked the horses to run away by loud cries, whipping and pricking them. The last words which the martyr was heard to say as they started were, "Lord, they tear my body, receive thou my soul." The horses dragged him away furiously into the woods, through brooks and over

<sup>1</sup> Ovid. *Metam.* lib. xi. fab. 14.



ditches, briars, and rocks; they beat down the hedges and broke through everything that came in their way. The ground, the thorns, trees, and stones were sprinkled with his blood, which the faithful that followed him at a distance weeping respectfully sucked up from every place with sponges, and they gathered together all the mangled parts of his flesh and limbs which lay scattered all about. They brought these precious relics to Rome and buried them in the subterraneous caverns called catacombs, which Prudentius here describes at large. He says that the sacred remains of St Hippolytus were deposited in this place near an altar, at which the faithful were fed with the heavenly banquet and the divine sacraments, and obtained the speedy effect of their requests to God. He testifies that as often as he had prayed there when he was at Rome, for the remedy of his infirmities, whether of body or mind, he had always found the desired relief; but professes that he was indebted to Christ for all favours received, because he gave to his martyr Hippolytus the power to obtain for him the divine succour. He says that from the rising to the setting of the sun, not only the inhabitants of Rome, but many from remote countries, resorted in great numbers to this holy place to pay adoration to God; and that especially on the martyr's festival, on the Ides, or 13th of August, both senators and people came thither to implore the divine mercy and kiss the shrine which contained the relics. He moreover describes a sumptuous *great church which was built in honour of the martyr near his tomb*, and which was thronged with multitudes of devout Christians. He mentions the effigies of the saint's martyrdom skilfully drawn over his tomb.

To obtain eternal rest should require, if it had been possible, eternal labour; to purchase a happiness without bounds, a man should be willing to suffer for a whole eternity. That, indeed, is impossible; but our trials might have been very long. What are a thousand years, or ten hundred thousand ages, in comparison to eternity? There can be no proportion between what is finite and that which is infinite. Yet God, in his great mercy, does not bid us suffer so long. He says, not a million, or a thousand years, or even five hundred; but only labour the few years that you live; and in these the dew of my consolations shall not be wanting; and I will recompense your patience for all with a glory that has no end.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 13 :*

ST CASSIAN, a Christian schoolmaster at Imola, condemned to death by his own scholars; his courage under his martyrdom was truly heroic : ST HIPPOLYTUS, one of twenty-five priests of Rome at one time deceived by the Novatian schism; he expiated this by repentance and a glorious martyrdom : ST JOHN BERCHMANS, S.J. : ST RADEGUNDES, a saintly Queen of France at whose burial a blind man received his sight : ST WIGBERT, Abbot, an Englishman who, despising the world in his youth, embraced the monastic state.

AUGUST 14

ST EUSEBIUS, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(ABOUT THE END OF THE THIRD CENTURY)

[From his genuine Acts, published by Dom. Martenne, Thesaur. Anecdotarum, t. iii. p. 1649.]

IN the reign of Diocletian and Maximian, before they had published any new edicts against the Christians, Eusebius, a holy priest, a man eminently endowed with the spirit of prayer and all apostolical virtues, suffered death for the faith, probably in Palestine. The emperor Maximian, happening to be in that country, an information was lodged with Maxentius, president of the province, against Eusebius, that he distinguished himself by his zeal in invoking and preaching Christ, and the holy man was apprehended and brought before him. Maxentius, whom the people stirred up by furious clamours against the servant of Christ, said to him, "Sacrifice to the gods freely, or you shall be made to do it against your will." The martyr replied, "There is a greater law which says, 'Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve.'" Maxentius urged, "Choose either to offer sacrifice, or to suffer the most rigorous torments." Eusebius answered, "It is not consistent with reason for a person to adore stones, than which nothing is viler or more brittle."

*Maxentius.* "These Christians are a hardened race of men, to whom it seems desirable rather to die than to live."

*Eusebius.* "It is impious to despise the light for the sake of darkness."

*Max.* "You grow more obstinate by lenity and entreaties. I therefore lay them aside, and frankly tell you that unless you sacrifice you shall be burnt alive."

*Euseb.* "As to that, I am in no pain. The more severe or cruel the torments are, the greater will the crown be."

Upon this Maxentius ordered that he should be stretched on the rack and his sides rent with iron hooks. Eusebius repeated, whilst he was tormenting, "Lord Jesus, preserve me. Whether we live or die, we are yours." The president was amazed at his constancy and fortitude, and after some time commanded that he should be taken off the rack. Then he said, "Do you know the decree of the senate, which commands all to sacrifice to the gods?" These words show that the saint was indicted upon former laws, and that this happened before the general edicts of Diocletian. Eusebius answered, "The command of God is to take place before that of man." The judge, flushed with rage, commanded that he should be led to the fire as if it were to be burnt alive.

Eusebius walked out with a constancy and joy painted in his countenance which struck the prefect and the bystanders with amazement, and the prefect called after him, "You run to an unnecessary death; your obstinacy

astonishes me. Change your mind." The martyr said, "If the emperor commands me to adore dumb metal in contempt of the true God, let me appear before him." This he said because he was impeached upon old laws, the present emperors not having yet made any new ones against the Christians. Maxentius therefore said to his guards and keepers, "Let him be confined till to-morrow"; and forthwith going in to the prince he said, "Great emperor, I have found a seditious man who is disobedient to the laws, and even denies to my face that the gods have any power, and refuses to sacrifice or to adore your name." The emperor answered, "Let him be brought before me." A person present, who had seen him at the prefect's tribunal, said, "If you see him, you will be moved by his speech." The emperor replied, "Is he such a man that he can even change me?" The prefect then spoke, "He will change not only you, but the minds of all the people. If you once behold his looks, you will feel yourself strangely moved to follow his inclinations." The emperor, however, ordered that he should be brought in. As he entered, everyone was struck in beholding the dazzling brightness which appeared in his countenance, the joy and the affecting composure, sweetness, and undaunted courage which shone in his looks and eye, and the gracefulness of his air and whole mien which, in his venerable old age, seemed to breathe an air of virtue above what is human. The emperor fixed his eyes steadfastly upon him as if he beheld in him something divine, and spoke thus, "Old man, why are you come before me? speak, and be not afraid." Seeing him still silent, he said, "Speak freely; answer my questions. I desire that you be saved." Eusebius answered, "If I hope to be saved by man, I can no longer expect salvation from God. If you excel in dignity and power, we are, nevertheless, all mortal alike. Neither will I be afraid to repeat before you what I have already declared. I am a Christian: nor can I adore wood and stones; but I most readily obey the true God, whom I know, and whose goodness I have experienced." The emperor said to the president, "What harm is it if this man adores the God of whom he speaks, as above all others?" Maxentius made answer, "Be not deceived, most invincible emperor; he does not call what you imagine God, but I know not what Jesus, whom our nation or ancestors never knew." The emperor said, "Go you forth and judge him according to justice and the laws. I will not be judge in such an affair."

This Maximian was by birth a barbarian, and one of the roughest and most brutish and savage of all men. Yet the undaunted and modest virtue of this stranger, set off by a heavenly grace, struck him with awe. He desired to save the servant of Christ; but, like Pilate, would not give himself any trouble or hazard incurring the displeasure of those whom on all other occasions he despised. So unaccountably cowardly are worldly and wicked men in the practice of virtue, who in vice are unbridled and

daring. Maxentius, going out, ascended his tribunal and sternly commanded Eusebius to sacrifice to the gods. He answered, "I will never sacrifice to those which can neither see nor hear." Maxentius said, "Sacrifice, or torments and flames must be your portion. He whom you fear is not able to deliver you from them." Eusebius replied, "Neither fire nor the sword will work any change in me. Tear this weak body to pieces with the utmost cruelty; treat it in what manner you please. My soul, which is God's, cannot be hurt by your torments. I persevere, firm in the holy law to which I have adhered from my cradle." The president, upon this, condemned him to be beheaded. Eusebius, hearing the sentence pronounced, said aloud, "I thank your goodness, and praise your power, O Lord Jesus Christ, that by calling me to the trial of my fidelity you have treated me as one of yours." He at that instant heard a voice from heaven saying to him, "If you had not been found worthy to suffer, you could not be admitted into the court of Christ or to the seats of the just." Being come to the place of execution, he knelt down and his head was struck off. His soul flew to Christ; but Maxentius, afflicted with numberless pains, would not please Christ, and never was able to please the world, which he so much dreaded and courted. This is the martyr Eusebius who is mentioned on this day in some ancient Martyrologies which bear the name of St Jerom, and others, which place his death in Palestine.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 14 :*

ST EUSEBIUS, priest and martyr about the end of the third century : another ST EUSEBIUS, priest and Confessor at Rome, who is called a martyr in some modern martyrologies. He sanctified himself by continual prayer.

## AUGUST 15

### THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY<sup>1</sup>

ON this festival the church commemorates the happy departure of the Virgin Mary, and her translation into the kingdom of her Son, in which she received from him a crown of immortal glory and a throne above all the other saints and heavenly spirits. After Christ, as the triumphant conqueror of death and hell, ascended into heaven, his blessed Mother remained at Jerusalem, persevering in prayer with the disciples till, with them, she had received the Holy Ghost. St John the Evangelist, to whom Christ recommended her on his cross, took her under his protection. The prelates assembled in the general council which was held at Ephesus in 431 mention as the highest prerogative of that city that it had received a great lustre from St John the Evangelist and the Mother of God, saying, In which John the Theologian and the Virgin Mother of God, the holy

<sup>1</sup> The period 1950-51 saw the Celebration of the Holy Year which was further marked by the Definition of the doctrine of the Assumption of Our Lady as in Article of Fourth November, 1950. The belief had been implicitly held from about the time of the Council of Chalcedon, 451, and, in fact, a Feast its honour had been established in the East years before.

Mary, conversed, or rather, are honoured with churches held in special veneration.<sup>1</sup> Tillemont and some others conjecture from this passage that she died at Ephesus; but others think rather at Jerusalem where, in later ages, mention is made of her sepulchre cut in a rock at Gethusemani. All agree that she lived to a very advanced age,<sup>2</sup> improving daily in perfect charity and in the most heroic exercise of all other virtues. She paid the common debt of nature, none among the children of Adam being exempt from that rigorous law. But the death of the saints is rather to be called a sweet sleep than death; much more that of the queen of saints who had been exempt from all sin.

It is a traditionary pious belief that the body of the Blessed Virgin was raised by God soon after her death and assumed to glory, by a singular privilege, before the general resurrection of the dead. This is mentioned by the learned Andrew of Crete,<sup>3</sup> in the East in the seventh, and by St. Gregory of Tours,<sup>4</sup> in the West in the sixth century. It is an opinion perfectly conformable to the sentiments of piety and respect which we owe to the glorious Mother of God. The preservation from corruption and speedy assumption to glory was a privilege which seems justly due to that sacred body which was never defiled by any sin, which was ever the most holy and pure temple of God, preserved from all contagion of Adam and the common curse of mankind; to that body from which the eternal word received his own adorable flesh, by whose hands he was pleased to be nourished and clothed on earth, and whom he vouchsafed to obey and honour as his mother. So great was the respect and veneration of the fathers towards this most holy and most exalted of all pure creatures that St Epiphanius durst not affirm that she ever died, because he had never found any mention of her death, and because she might have been preserved immortal and translated to glory without dying.<sup>5</sup> Much more ought piety to incline us to receive with deference a tradition so ancient and so well recommended to us as is this of the corporeal assumption of the Virgin Mary; an opinion which the Church so far favours as to read, from the works of St John Damascen and St Bernard, an account of it in the breviary as proper to edify and excite the devotion of her children. But then, that our piety may be discreet, we must imitate the moderation and cautious reserve of our Holy Mother the Church, and not put mere opinions any way upon a level with articles of faith or matters of divine revelation.

The Assumption of the Virgin Mary is the greatest of all the festivals which the church celebrates in her honour. It is the consummation of all the other great mysteries by which her life was rendered most wonderful;

<sup>1</sup> Con. t. iii. pp. 5, 73.

<sup>2</sup> See Suarez Tr. de Mysteriis B. V. Mariæ.

<sup>3</sup> Or. 2, de laudibus Assumptæ Virg. p. 132; also by German., patriarch of Constantinople, Or. 1, de Dormit. Deiparæ, &c.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. de Glor. Mart. c. 4; also St Ildefonse, Serm. 6, de Assumptione. And the old Gallican or Gothic missal, published by Card. Thomasius, and by Mabillon. See Card. Lambertini (afterwards Pope Ben. XIV) Comment. de D. N. J. Christi Matrisque ejus Festis, par. 2, c. cxii. p. 100

<sup>5</sup> St Epiph. hæc. lxxviii. c. 11, and xxiii. pp. 1034-1055.

it is the birthday of her true greatness and glory, and the crowning of all the virtues of her whole life which we admire single in her other festivals. It is for all these gifts conferred on her that we are on this day to praise and thank him who is the author of them; but especially for that glory with which he hath crowned her. In this we must join our homages and joy with all the blessed spirits in heaven. What must have been their exultation and triumph on this occasion! With what honour do we think God himself received his mother into his kingdom! What glory did he bestow on her whom he exalted above the highest cherubims and placed on a throne raised above all the choirs of his blessed spirits! The seraphims, angels, and all the other glorious inhabitants of his kingdom, seeing the graces with which she was adorned, and the dazzling beauty and lustre with which she shone forth as she mounted on high from the earth, cried out in amaze, "Who is she that cometh up from the desert, flowing with charms and delights, leaning upon her beloved?"<sup>1</sup> Accustomed as they were to the wonders of heaven, in which God displayeth the magnificence of his power and greatness, they are nevertheless astonished to behold the glory of Mary; and much more so, to see the earth, which had been loaded with maledictions and covered with monsters of abomination and horror, now produce so great a treasure and send to them so rich a present. They pronounce it blessed for having given her birth; but their heaven much more so in now receiving her for eternity.

We extol her incomparable dignity in being the mother of her Creator; a dignity which no mortal tongue can express; but we may confidently say that the glory with which Christ received her in heaven is no less above the reach of our understanding. Martha was highly favoured when she had the honour to harbour Jesus under her roof; the history of which is read in the gospel of this festival. But that was only an emblem or shadow of the happiness of the Virgin Mary, who not only received her Creator into her house, but conceived and bore him in her womb.

She is said to be clothed with the sun, that is, with a glory transcending that of the other blessed as the brightness of the sun surpasseth the stars; it is added that the moon is placed under her feet. "Of this heavenly queen," says St Francis of Sales,<sup>2</sup> "from my heart I proclaim this loving and true thought. The angels and saints are only compared to stars, and the first of these to the fairest of these. But she is fair as the moon; as easily to be discerned from the other saints as the sun is from the stars." She receives a crown, not like those of other saints, but of twelve stars.<sup>3</sup> If she rejoices exceedingly in her own bliss, much more will she overflow with joy in the glory of her divine Son. What a singular pleasure must she feel to behold him whom she had with so much solicitude ministered to, so affectionately attended, and so grievously mourned for, now placed

<sup>1</sup> Cant. viii. 5.<sup>2</sup> Lib. iii. On the Love of God, c. 8.<sup>3</sup> Apoc. xii. 1.

on the throne of his majesty, resplendent with the glory of the divinity, and proclaimed everywhere the Lord of all things! What raptures of love and joy must transport her soul at this sight! And with what tenderness does he address and say to her, "You ministered to me far above all others in my state of humiliation; and I will minister to you more abundantly than to any other in my glory. I received from you my humanity, and I will bestow on you the riches of my immortality." The devil, beholding her exaltation, swells with rage to see his seduction of the first Eve become an occasion of so great a dignity and glory to Mary. All the holy choirs of heaven, contemplating her exaltation, praise the mercies and gifts of God in her. We on earth are bound, on many accounts, to join them in the duty of thanksgiving and joy.

Whilst we contemplate the glory to which Mary is raised by her triumph on this day, in profound sentiments of veneration, astonishment, and praise, we ought, for our own advantage, to consider by what means she arrived at this sublime degree of honour and happiness, that we may walk in her steps. That she should be the mother of her Creator was the most wonderful miracle and the highest dignity; yet it was not properly this that God crowned in her, as Christ himself assures us.<sup>1</sup> So near a relation to God was to be adorned with the greatest graces; and Mary's fidelity to them was the measure of her glory. It was her virtue that God considered in the recompense he bestowed upon her; herein he regarded her charity, her profound humility, her purity, her patience, her meekness, holy zeal, and ardour in paying to God the most perfect homage of adoration, love, praise, and thanksgiving. Charity, or the love of God, is the queen and the most excellent of all virtues; it is also their *form* or soul; because no other virtue can be meritorious of eternal life unless it be animated and proceed from the motive of holy charity. In this consists the perfection of all true sanctity. Mary surpassed all others in sanctity in proportion as she excelled them in the most pure, most ardent, and most perfect charity. This virtue she exercised and improved continually in her soul by the ardour with which she served Christ both in person and in his members—the poor; by the most constant and perfect obedience to the divine law in all things; by the most entire resignation and sacrifice of herself to God's will; the most invincible patience and meekness, and by all other virtues; especially assiduous acts of adoration, hope, praise, thanksgiving, supplication, and the like parts of prayer, in which she employed her holy soul with all her affections. But if charity was the perfection of her eminent sanctity, its ground-work was her sincere and most profound humility. Yes; the assumption of Mary in glory was only the triumph of her humility. Hereof we have the most authentic assurance.<sup>2</sup> She was exalted in virtue, dignity, and glory above all other pure or mere creatures, because she was

<sup>1</sup> Luke xi. 28; Matt. xii. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Luke i. 48.

of all others the most humble. Therefore did charity and every other virtue shoot so deep roots in her heart and raise their head like a palm-tree in Cades, and is like a cedar on Libanus; spreading their shade like a cypress-tree on Mount Sion, and diffusing their sweet odour as a rose-plant in Jericho, like cinnamon and aromatic balm, and like the best myrrh.<sup>1</sup> Therefore she ascends so high because in her own sentiments of herself she was so lowly.

Meekness and patience are the sister-virtues and inseparable companions of humility. By these was Mary to purchase her great crown; and to furnish her with occasions for the most perfect exercise of these and all other virtues in the most heroic degree, God was pleased to visit her with the sharpest trials. Though she was the mother of God, never defiled with the least stain of sin, and, by a singular privilege of grace, free from concupiscence, yet she was not exempted from the cross of her Son. Nay, how much nearer a relation she bore to him, and how much dearer and more precious she was in his sight, so much a larger portion of his cup did he present to her above his other saints. Though she had no sins to satisfy for, yet her virtue was to be exercised and improved by trials, and the higher degree of glory was prepared for her, by so much the more severe crosses was it to be earned. Besides these reasons for suffering, we who are criminal sinners have immense debts to cancel, an unruly concupiscence to keep under, and a fund of inordinate self-love to fight against and subdue. Yet we would live without mortification and suffering, and are inclined to murmur at what ought to be the subject of our joy and ambition.

Let us consider a little the life of Mary. What must she have suffered from the hardships of poverty, the alarming persecution of Herod, the banishment into Egypt, living after her return in a kind of exile for fear of Archelaus! Under these, and many like circumstances, we may easily imagine what continual crosses she had to bear together with her divine infant. What must she feel to see him in want, suffering cold and all other inconveniences! What, when she lost him in the temple, and saw him exposed to hardships and ill treatment on other occasions! He was persecuted and reviled by the Pharisees and others, his meekness despised, and his most holy doctrine contradicted. It was also a continual affliction to her tender heart, always full of zeal for the honour of God, and of charity for men, to see the whole world filled with sins, blasphemies against so good a God, scandals, abuses, and wrecks of souls. But what was her grief to see her most amiable and divine Son in his sacred passion, covered with ignominies, overwhelmed with the blackest calumnies, bound, scourged, crowned with thorns, and dying on a cross! How sharp a sword of most bitter grief must have then pierced the soul of this mother of sorrows!

<sup>1</sup> Ecclus. xxiv.



After her divine Son had left the earth, how earnest were her sighs to be united to him in glory! How bitter must the prolongation of her banishment amidst the sins of the world have been to her, whose burning charity surpassed that of all other saints! Only patience, meekness, submission to the will of God, entire confidence in him, and the assiduous exercise of prayer and divine love were her support, her comfort, and the rich harvest which she reaped from her sufferings. The weight and duration of these crosses, and the great virtues which she practised under them, are the measure of that height of glory to which she is exalted. We see the means by which Mary mounted to the happiness which she now enjoys. No other way is open to us. The same path which conducted her to glory will also lead us thither; we shall be partners in her reward if we copy her virtues. Her example is both our model and our encouragement. From her assumption we derive another great advantage—that of her patronage. Mary, crowned in heaven, is an advocate with her Son in favour of us sinners.

The prayers of the holy Virgin Mary, whilst she lived on earth, were certainly of great efficacy, much more than those of Abraham, Job, or Elias. Now raised to a state of bliss, she cannot have lost the power to intercede with God for us; this, on the contrary, must be much greater, as she is now seated near the throne of mercy. If the angels who are before the throne of God offer our prayers to him, and pray themselves for us; if the saints in glory employ their mediation in our favour, shall not the most holy Mother of God be able to do the same office for us?

The constant doctrine and tradition of the church, through all ages, render us secure in the practice of invoking this holy Virgin. The Protestant century-writers of Magdeburg trace it for us as high as the second century and charge St Irenæus with teaching it in the same manner that the Catholic Church does at this day. This is their remark upon those words of that great and primitive doctor: "The Virgin Mary is made the advocate of Eve," that is, for men upon whom their first mother entailed a curse.<sup>1</sup> St Irenæus is one of the first in the list of the fathers; and this holy and wholesome devotion he learned from his masters, St Polycarp, and other immediate disciples of the apostles; and the same has been delivered down by the pastors of the church with the whole sacred deposit of our faith, without changing one iota; for its faith is always the same and unalterable. This is easy to prove with regard to the present point from the clear testimonies of ancient venerable fathers. But it would be superfluous and tedious to load a discourse with the quotations of all those writers who are, in every age, vouchsafers of this article of the Catholic faith, and witnesses of the homages which the church, instructed by the Holy Ghost, has never failed to pay to the glorious Mother of God. It is confirmed

<sup>1</sup> St Iren. lib. v. c. 21 (ol. 19), p. 352.

from the watchful attention with which the church has condemned all errors that have been broached contrary to it.

St Epiphanius informs us<sup>1</sup> that in the fourth age, among the Apollinarists, sprang up, in Arabia, the heretics called *Antidicomarianite*, or adversaries of Mary, who affirmed that she had not remained a virgin, and that after the birth of Christ she had children by St Joseph. He tells us<sup>2</sup> that there arose at the same time, and in the same country, another heresy quite contrary to the former, the professors of which were called Collyridians, from certain cakes, called in Greek Collyrides, which they offered to the Virgin Mary, honouring her with sacrifices as a kind of divinity, and thus changing piety and devotion into superstition and idolatry. St Epiphanius, discoursing against this heresy, concludes that Mary ought to be honoured but God alone adored. This error was immediately crushed by the authority of the church; but it shows that the faithful then paid solemn devotion to this queen of heaven, which some ignorant people took occasion impiously to pervert. Likewise, when Nestorius blasphemously denied to the Virgin Mary the title and dignity of Mother of God, this heresy did but awake the piety of the faithful, and the error, as it always happens, served to establish the truth with greater lustre by the decisions of councils, and the most authentic public monuments and writings of the fathers, full of devotion and the strongest addresses to this glorious advocate of sinners, as may be seen in several works of St Cyril of Alexandria against Nestorius, in the discourses of St Proclus on the Virgin Mary against the same heresiarch, and others.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 15 :*

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY : ST ALIPIUS, Bishop, born at Tagaste in Africa, of which town the great St Augustine was also a native : ST ARNOUL or ARNULPHUS, Bishop of Soissons : ST MAC-CARTIN, called ARD or AED, Bishop of Clogher in Ireland and titular patron of that diocese.

AUGUST 16

ST HYACINTH, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 1257)

[From the bull of his canonization by Clement VIII, published by Fontanini, in 1729, in *Codice Canonization*, his life by Alberti, and the Polish historians. See Touron, *de Vie St Domin.* lib. vi. et Cuper the Bollandist, t. iii. Aug. p. 309.]

ST HYACINTH, whom the Church historians call the apostle of the North and the Thaumaturgus of his age, was of the ancient house of the Counts of Oldrovans, one of the most illustrious of Silesia, a province at that time united to Poland, now to Bohemia, or Germany. His grandfather, the great general against the Tartars, left two sons. Yvo, the younger, was Chancellor of Poland and Bishop of Cracow. Eustachias, the elder, was

<sup>1</sup> Hær. lxxvii. n. 26, et hær. 78.

<sup>2</sup> St Epiph. hær. lxxix.

Count of Konski, the first fruit of whose virtuous marriage was St Hyacinth, born in 1185 in the castle of Saxony, in the diocese of Breslaw, in Silesia. His parents diligently cultivated his happy natural dispositions for virtue, and he preserved an unspotted innocence of manners through the slippery paths of youth during his studies at Cracow, Prague, and Bologna, in which last university he took the degree of doctor of the laws and divinity. Returning to the Bishop of Cracow, predecessor to Yvo of Konski, that pious prelate gave him a prebend in his cathedral and employed him as his assistant and counsellor in the administration of his diocese. Hyacinth showed great prudence, capacity, and zeal in the multiplicity of his exterior occupations, but never suffered them to be any impediment to his spirit of prayer and recollection. He practised uncommon mortifications, and was assiduous in assisting at all the parts of the divine office, and in visiting and serving the sick in the hospitals; all his ecclesiastical revenue he bestowed in alms. Vincent, his bishop, abdicating his dignity with the view of preparing himself for death in holy solitude, Yvo of Konski, Chancellor of Poland, was placed in that see, and went to Rome, whether to obtain the confirmation of his election or for other affairs is not mentioned. He took with him his two nephews, Hyacinth and Ceslas. St Dominic was then at Rome, this happening in the year 1218. Yvo and the Bishop of Prague, charmed with the sanctity of his life, the unction of his discourses, and the fruit of his sermons, and being eye-witnesses to some of his miracles, begged some of his preachers for their dioceses. The holy founder was obliged to excuse himself, having sent away so many that he was not able to supply them. But four of the domestic attendants of the Bishop of Cracow desired to embrace his austere institute, namely, the bishop's two nephews, Hyacinth and Ceslas, and two German gentlemen, Herman and Henry. They received the habit at the hands of St Dominic, in his convent of St Sabina, in March 1218. The perfect disengagement from all things in this world, the contempt of themselves, the universal mortification of their senses, the denial of their own will, the love of continual prayer, and an ardent zeal to glorify God in all their actions and sufferings, were the solid foundation which they laid of the spiritual edifice of their own perfection, by which they laboured in the first place to sanctify their own souls. They made their solemn vows by a dispensation, after a novitiate of about six months only; and Hyacinth, then thirty-three years old, was appointed superior of their mission. Yvo of Konski set out for Poland with a suitable equipage. The missionaries took another road, that they might travel on foot and without provisions, according to the spirit of their institute. Having passed through the Venetian territories, they entered Upper Carinthia, where they stayed six months, and St Hyacinth gave the habit to several of the clergymen and others, founded a convent, and left Herman to govern it. The Archbishop of Saltzburg received them with all possible respect, and the apostolic

men passed through Stiria, Austria, Moravia, and Silesia, announcing everywhere the word of God.

In Poland they were received by all ranks with extraordinary marks of joy and honour. At Cracow the first sermons of St Hyacinth were attended with incredible success, and in a short time the infamous public vices which reigned in that capital were banished; the spirit of prayer and charity, the holy and frequent use of the sacraments, watching, and mortification were revived as they had been practised in the primitive ages. Reconciliations of persons at variance, and restitutions for injustices, which seemed to be despaired of, were effected. The great ones, by their conversions, set the people an example of the most edifying docility. How great soever the power of the words of this apostle and of the example of his holy life were, they would have been less efficacious had they not been supported by an extraordinary spirit of prayer; and also by miracles, though the saint strove to conceal them under the veil of humility. He founded a numerous convent of his Order, called of the Holy Trinity, in Cracow; another at Sendomir, and a third at Plocsko, upon the Vistula, in Moravia. The bull of the canonization of our saint mentions a miracle in that country, attested by above four hundred witnesses, and an ancient history of it is kept in the treasury of the church of Cracow.<sup>1</sup> St Hyacinth came with three companions to the banks of the Vistula, going to preach at Wisgrade; but the flood was so high that none of the boats durst venture over. The disciple of Christ, having made the sign of the cross, walked upon the waters of that deep and rapid river as if it had been upon firm land, in the sight of a great multitude of people waiting for him on the opposite bank towards the town. We may easily imagine with what docility and respect he was heard by those, several of whom had been spectators of this prodigy.

Having preached through the principal cities of Poland, he undertook to carry the gospel into the vast and savage countries of the North. His zeal was too active for him to allow himself any rest whilst he saw souls perishing eternally in the ignorance of the true God; and the length of the journeys over rocks, precipices, and vast deserts were not able to discourage his heroic soul, which delighted in labours and dangers and could think nothing difficult which was undertaken for so great an end. He banished, in many places, superstition, vice, and idolatry, and built convents of his institute in Prussia, Pomerania, and other countries lying near the Baltic, as at Camyn upon the Oder, at Premislau or Ferzemysla, Culm, Elbin, Könisberg, in the isle of Rugen, and the peninsula of Gedan. In this last place, then a wilderness, he foretold a great city would be built; and in the same age, in 1295, Primislas, King of Poland, laid there the foundation of the famous city of Dantzic, capital of Regal Prussia; and

<sup>1</sup> Apud Bolland. t. iii. Aug.

though the Lutheran heresy in the sixteenth age destroyed or profaned all the other churches, that founded by St Hyacinth still remains in the hands of the Catholics, is their parish church, and is served by Dominican friars. The saint left Prussia and Pomerania to preach in Denmark, Swedeland, Gothia, and Norway; in all which countries there still remained many idolaters. Lest the devil should shortly destroy the fruits of his labours, he everywhere founded monasteries and left disciples to preserve and extend them. Notwithstanding his fatigues and hardships amidst barbarous nations, in excessive cold climates, far from allowing himself any dispensation in the perpetual abstinence and other severities of his rule, he continually added to them new austerities. His fasts were almost perpetual, and on all Fridays and vigils, on bread and water; the bare ground was his bed, and sometimes in the open fields; neither hunger, thirst, weariness, rains, extreme cold, or dangers could ever abate his ardour to gain a soul to Christ. He abhorred even the shadow of sin; was humble, charitable, and compassionate, bearing the bowels of a father towards all; every man's distress drew tears in abundance from his eyes; and he comforted and encouraged all that groaned under the burden of any affliction.

After the abovesaid missions he went into Lesser Russia, or Red Russia, where he made a long stay and induced the prince and great multitudes of people to abjure the Greek schism and unite themselves to the Catholic Church. He there built the flourishing convents of Leopol or Lemburg, and of Halitz, upon the river Neister; from thence he penetrated as far as the Black Sea and into the isles of the Archipelago. Thence returning towards the north he entered the great dukedom of Muscovy, called also Great Russia, or Black Russia, where he attacked a hundred-headed hydra of idolaters, Mahometans, and Greek schismatics. The few Catholics remaining there had not so much as one church to assemble in. He found the Duke Voldimir inflexible in his errors; however, he obtained of him permission to preach to the Catholics. He no sooner began to announce the gospel, confirming his doctrine by miracles, but Mahometans, heathens, and schismatics flocked to hear him, and in great multitudes became docile to the truth. St Hyacinth founded a great convent at Kiow, then the capital of both Russias. Seeing one day an assembly of idolaters on their knees before a great tree in an island in the river Boristhenes, commonly called the Nieper, he walked over the water to them and easily prevailed with them, after the sight of such a miracle, to destroy their idols, fell the great oak, and embrace the faith. All these conversions gave no small uneasiness to the duke, who hereupon began by threats and by overt acts to persecute the Catholics; by which he drew down the vengeance of heaven; for the Tartars, so formidable to all Europe in the thirteenth age, after a most bloody and obstinate siege, took Kiow by assault, sacked it, and setting it on fire reduced it to a heap of ashes. St Hyacinth, in the

midst of this desolation, whilst the streets ran in streams of blood, and many parts of the city were on fire, carrying the holy ciborium in one hand and an image of our Lady in the other, passed through the flames and over the river Nieper.<sup>1</sup>

The saint returned to Cracow upon this accident in 1231, being then fifty-six years old, and enjoyed some repose in his house of the Holy Trinity the two following years, still continuing to preach and instruct, both in the city and the country. After two years he made the painful visitation of his converts and communities among the Danes, Swedes, Prussians, Muscovites, and other nations, and penetrated among the Tartars. To preach in Cumania, a country inhabited by the Jazyges, on the Danube, had been the object of the zealous desires of St Dominic, this being regarded as the most barbarous and obstinate of all infidel nations. Some Dominican preachers had entered this province in the year 1228. St Hyacinth came into their ungrateful vineyard and, in consequence of his preaching, in a short time several thousands of these barbarians received the sacrament of baptism, and among them a prince of the Tartars who went with several lords of his nation to the first general council of Lateran in 1245. We read in the life of St Lewis that when he landed in Cyprus in 1248 he met an embassy sent him from a powerful Christian prince of these Tartars. Though Great Tartary be a vast wild tract of land, St Hyacinth travelled quite through it, announcing Christ everywhere, penetrating into Thibet, near the East Indies, and into Catay, which is the most northern province of China. The missionaries who in the last age visited these parts found in them many remains of Christianity once planted there.

St Hyacinth returning into Poland entered again Red Russia, and there converted many from the schism, particularly Prince Caloman and his wife Salome, who both embraced a state of continency and perfection. The great convent he founded at Vilna, the capital of Lithuania, is the mother-house of a large province of this religious Order. After having travelled above four thousand leagues, he arrived at Cracow in the year 1257, which was the seventy-second and last of his life. Boleslas V, surnamed the Chaste, and his pious wife Cunegunda, were directed by his advice to square their lives by the maxims of Christian perfection. Primislava, a noble lady, having sent her son to invite the saint to come and preach to her vassals, the young nobleman was drowned on his return in crossing a great river. The afflicted mother caused the corpse to be laid at the feet of the servant of God, who, after a fervent prayer, took him by the hand and restored him to her alive and sound. This is the last miracle recorded in his life. In his last sickness he was forewarned by God, on the 14th of August, that he should leave this world on the next day, the feast of the Assumption of our Lady, his great patroness. He made a pathetic exhortation to his

<sup>1</sup> See Bolland. t. iii. Aug. p. 318.

religious brethren, recommending to them especially meekness and humility of heart, and to have great care always to preserve mutual love and charity and to esteem poverty as men that have renounced all things of the earth. He was canonized by Clement VIII in 1594. His relics are preserved in a rich chapel built in his honour at Cracow. Anne of Austria, Queen of France, mother of Lewis XIV, obtained of Ladislas, King of Poland, a portion of them, which she deposited in the great church of the Dominicans in Paris.

All Christians are not called to the apostolic functions of the ministry; but everyone is bound to preach to his neighbour by the modesty of his deportment; by a sincere spirit of meekness, humility, patience, charity, and religion; by an exact fidelity in all duties; by fervour and zeal in the divine service; by temperance and the mortification of all passions and ill humours.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 16 :*

ST HYACINTH, whom the Church historians call the Apostle of the North : SR ROCH, an eminent servant of God, illustrious in the fourteenth century. He devoted himself to the sick during a raging pestilence, wore himself out in the practice of penance and in fervent exercises of charity, and died about 1327.

## AUGUST 17

### ST MAMAS, MARTYR

(ABOUT THE YEAR 275)

[From the panegyrics composed in his honour by St Basil, hom. 26, and St Gregory Nazianzen, Or. 43. No use is made of the modern Greek acts of his martyrdom.]

ST MAMAS is ranked by the Greeks among the great martyrs. His martyrdom is placed under Aurelian. That prince was a Scythian, a native of Dacia, or Mœsia, and upon the death of Claudius II, in 270, was chosen emperor by the army at Sirmium, and his election was confirmed by the unwilling senate. Could the majesty of the Roman name be reduced to a meaner slavery than that of obeying any slave or barbarian whom the fortune of war had advanced in the army, and on whom it pleased the soldiery to bestow the empire? Aurelian was a good soldier, bold, enterprising, and severe in military discipline. Being raised to the imperial throne, he discovered his inclination to cruelty by putting to death many senators upon the slightest pretences, and was insolent, haughty, and proud, excessively fond of magnificence, pomp, jewels, and gold. Aurelius Victor says he was the first among the Roman emperors that wore a diadem. He was author of the ninth persecution raised against the Christians. To this he was excited in an expedition he made into Asia.

Zenobia, Queen of the East, by the concession of Gallien, was mistress of large dominions, the reward of her and her late husband Odenatus's valour in bravely repulsing the Persians. Aurelian determined to divest

her of her kingdom; but she defended herself by the counsels of Longinus, the most judicious critic and rhetorician, who had been her preceptor and counsellor. Aurelian defeated her armies, destroyed Palmyra in Syria, the capital city of her kingdom, in 273, took her and Longinus prisoners, basely put the latter to death, and led her in triumph. He indeed spared her life and gave her very great estates in Italy, and she lived at Rome in great dignity many years till her death. Zenobia had favoured the Christians in the East; and, though none of them had taken up arms against Aurelian, being returned to Rome from this war, he published most bloody edicts against them in 275, but was himself cut off by a conspiracy in Thrace, as he was marching at the head of his army against the Persians, in April the same year. Lactantius says<sup>1</sup> that by his persecution he drew down the divine displeasure on himself; and he lived not long enough to execute what he had designed, ending his days in the beginning of his rage. Nevertheless, St Austin<sup>2</sup> and others mention his bloody persecution, and the calendars testify that many suffered in it.<sup>3</sup> Among these none is more famous than St Mamas. St Basil and St Gregory Nazianzen inform us that he was a poor shepherd's boy at Cæsarea in Cappadocia who, seeking from his infancy the kingdom of God with his whole heart, distinguished himself by his extraordinary fervour in the divine service. Being apprehended by the persecutors about the year 274 or 275, he suffered the most cruel torments with a holy joy and attained in his youth a glorious crown of martyrdom. Sozomen<sup>4</sup> and St Gregory Nazianzen<sup>5</sup> tell us that Julian the Apostate and his brother Gallus, being educated at Cæsarea, diverted themselves, when children, in building churches to the martyrs, particularly one to St Mamas; but that while Gallus's part advanced, that of Julian fell down again every day.

Every Christian ought to rejoice exceedingly that, how mean soever his condition may be as to the world, an eternal kingdom, compared to which all the sceptres of the earth are mere shadows and dust, is offered him by God, and that it is in his power through the divine grace to obtain it; for heaven is justly called in the scriptures a kingdom, and all its glorious inhabitants are truly great kings, God communicating to every one of them a full partnership of that honour, in an entire possession of overflowing joy and unspeakable pleasure, of all riches, honour, power, and liberty of doing and commanding according to their own will, which is in all things subject and conformable to the divine. Our faith must be exceeding weak if we do not, with the saints, offer violence and strain every sinew to make sure our election; if we do not find our joy in all sufferings and disgraces here, by which we may purchase an eternal weight of glory;

<sup>1</sup> De Mort. Persec. c. 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Berti Diss. Chronol. t. ii. p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> Or. 3, in Julian.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. xviii. de Civ. c. 52, &c.

<sup>5</sup> Hist. lib. v. c. 2.



and if we do not scorn from our hearts this little point of the earth, with all its empty and false enjoyments and promises, making no other use of its goods than as steps to conduct us to God's immense and immortal kingdom, framed by his almighty hand to display his infinite power, munificence, love, and goodness in favour of his faithful chosen servants to all eternity.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 17 :*

ST LIBERATUS, Abbot, and SIX MONKS, summoned to Carthage and martyred there : and ST MAMAS, about 275, ranked by the Greeks among the great martyrs.

## AUGUST 18

### ST HELEN, EMPRESS

(A.D. 328)

[From Eusebius's life of Constantine, Baronius and Alford's Annals, Jacutius. O. S. Ben. Syntagm. de Hist. Constantini M. Romæ, 1755 ; Ledarchius, Diss. de Basilis SS. Marcellini et Petri. Aringhi, Rom. subter. lib. iv. c. 9 ; Pinius, t. iii. Aug. p. 548.]

WE are assured by the unanimous tradition of our English historians that this holy empress was a native of our island. Leland, the most diligent searcher of our antiquities, says<sup>1</sup> Helen was the only daughter of King Coilus, who lived in constant amity with the Romans and held of them his sovereignty. The Glastonbury historian says the same. Henry of Huntington tells us that this was the King Coël who first built walls round the city of Colchester, and beautified it so much that it derives from him its name. That town has for several ages boasted that it gave birth to this great empress ; and the inhabitants, to testify their veneration for her memory, take for the arms of the town, in remembrance of the cross which she discovered, a knotty cross between four crowns, as Camden takes notice. Though Mr Drake will have it that she was rather born at York. Constantius, at that time only a private officer in the army, had the happiness to make her his first wife, and had by her Constantine, his eldest son, who, as all agree, had his first education under her watchful eye.

Constantine, from his first accession to the throne, by his edicts, forbade the Christians to be molested on account of their religion. Fluctuating what deity to invoke before his battle with Maxentius, he was at length inspired to address himself to the true God and encouraged by miraculous visions. From that time he published frequent edicts in favour of the Christian faith, built stately churches, munificently adorned altars, and delighted much in the conversation of bishops, whom he often admitted to his table, notwithstanding the meanness of their outward appearance. Baronius says that the same year in which he vanquished Maxentius he gave to the Bishop of Rome the imperial Lateran palace. In the following

<sup>1</sup> Lib. de Script. Britan. p. 24.

year, 313, Pope Melchiades held in it a synod in the apartment of Fausta, the wife of Constantine; and accordingly we find the popes in possession of it in the fourth century. We may judge of this emperor's liberality to the bishops for the use of the church and poor from his letter to Cæcilian, Bishop of Carthage, in which he sent him an order to receive from his chief treasurer of Africa three thousand purses, which amounted to above twenty thousand pounds sterling; adding, that if he found anything more wanting he should without difficulty demand it of his treasurer, who had from him an order to give him without delay whatever sum he should require. He distributed alms abundantly among the poor of all kinds, even among the pagans. Those who were fallen from a better condition he assisted after a more generous manner, giving land to some and places to others; he was particularly careful of orphans and widows, and gave portions to virgins.

It appears from Eusebius that St Helen was not converted to the faith with her son till after his miraculous victory; but so perfect was her conversion that she embraced all the heroic practices of Christian perfection, especially the virtues of piety and almsdeeds, in which she doubtless was a great spur to the emperor. Her dutiful son always honoured and respected her, forgetting in her regard that he was emperor of the world, unless to employ his power in serving her. He caused her to be proclaimed Augusta, or empress, in his armies, and through all the provinces of his empire; and medals to be struck in her honour, in which she is called Flavia Julia Helena. She was advanced in years before she knew Christ; but her fervour and zeal were such as to make her retrieve the time lost in ignorance; and God prolonged her life yet many years to edify by her example the church which her son laboured to exalt by his authority. Rufinus calls her faith and holy zeal incomparable; and she kindled the same fire in the hearts of the Romans, as St Gregory the Great assures is.<sup>1</sup> Forgetting her dignity, she assisted in the churches amidst the people in modest and plain attire; and to attend at the divine office was her greatest delight. Though mistress of the treasures of the empire, she only made use of them in liberalities and alms; she distributed her charities with profusion wherever she came, and was the common mother of the indigent and distressed. She built churches and enriched them with precious vessels and ornaments.

Licinius, in the East, became jealous of Constantine's prosperity, and attacked him by various hostilities. The armies of Licinius were more numerous, and he threatened that if his gods gave him victory, as his soothsayers and magicians pretended unanimously to foretell him, he would exterminate their enemies. Constantine prepared himself before the days of each battle by prayer, fasting, and retirement; and caused the ensign

<sup>1</sup> Lib. ix. Ep. 9.

called the imperial Labarum, in which were the effigies of the cross, to be carried before his army. In battle, victory everywhere followed this chief standard so visibly that Licinius, making a second stand near Chalcedon, ordered his soldiers to make no attacks on the side where the great standard of the cross was, nor to look towards it, confessing that it was fatal to him.<sup>1</sup> He was first vanquished near Adrianople, where he left almost thirty-four thousand dead upon the spot, in July 324; and in a second battle near Chalcedon in which, out of one hundred and thirty thousand men, scarce three thousand escaped. Licinius fell into the hands of the conqueror, who spared his life and sent him to Thessalonica where, upon information that he was attempting to raise new disturbances, he ordered him to be strangled the year following.

Constantine, being by this victory become master of the East, concurred in assembling the Council of Nice in 325; and in 326 wrote to Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, concerning the building of a most magnificent church upon Mount Calvary. St Helen, though then fourscore years of age, took the charge on herself to see this pious work executed, desiring at the same time to discover the sacred cross on which our Redeemer died. Eusebius, in his *life of Constantine*,<sup>2</sup> mentions no other motive of her journey but her desire of adorning the churches and oratories in the holy places, and of relieving the poor in those parts, doubtless out of devotion to the mysteries of our divine Redeemer's sufferings; but Rufin<sup>3</sup> attributes it to visions; Socrates<sup>4</sup> to admonitions in her sleep; Theophanes to divine warnings;<sup>5</sup> St Paulinus<sup>6</sup> to her piety, saying that she undertook this journey to find the cross, amongst other motives of devotion. And Constantine, in his letter to Macarius, the Bishop of Jerusalem, commissions him to make search for it on Mount Golgotha, of Calvary.<sup>7</sup> The heap of earth which had been thrown by the pagans on the spot was removed and the statue of Venus cast down, as St Paulinus and St Ambrose relate.

Another perplexing difficulty occurred in distinguishing the cross of Christ amongst the three that were found; for the nails found with it were no sufficient proof. The title which lay near it and, doubtless, the marks of the nails which had fixed it, furnished an indication, as St Chrysostom<sup>8</sup> and St Ambrose<sup>9</sup> mention. Yet some doubt remained, to remove which the most wise and divine Bishop Macarius, as he is called by Theodoret, who was one of the prelates who had condemned the impiety of Arius at Nice the year before, suggested that a miraculous proof should be asked of God. The pious empress therefore went, attended by the bishop and others, to the house of a lady of quality who lay very sick in the city. The empress having made a prayer aloud, recorded by Rufin,<sup>10</sup> the bishop applied

<sup>1</sup> Eus. Vit. Constan. lib. ii. c. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. iii. c. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. x. c. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. i. c. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Chronogr. p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> Ep. § 4, n. 43.

<sup>7</sup> Theoph. ib.

<sup>8</sup> Hom. 85, al. 84, in Joan. ed. Ben. t. viii. p. 505.

<sup>9</sup> Or. de Obitu Theodosii.

<sup>10</sup> Hist. lib. x c 8.

the crosses, and the sick person was restored instantly at the touch of the true cross, as all these historians relate. Sozomen, St Paulinus, and Sulpicius Severus<sup>1</sup> add that a person dead was by the like touch raised to life; but this deserves little notice, being only related upon report, as Sozomen expresses it. St Helen, when she had discovered the holy cross, "adored not the wood, but the King, Him who hung on the wood. She burned with an earnest desire of touching the remedy of immortality." These are the words of St Ambrose. Part of the cross she recommended to the care of the Bishop Macarius, and covered it with a rich silver case, of which the Bishop of Jerusalem was the guardian, and which he every year exposed to the adoration of the people, says St Paulinus, and oftener according to the devotion of pilgrims. She built a most sumptuous church on the spot to receive this precious relic. The other part of the cross she sent to her son the emperor at Constantinople, where it was covered and exposed to the veneration of the people with the greatest solemnity. Of the nails, one she put in a bridle, another in a diadem for her son, says St Ambrose. A third she threw into the Adriatic gulf in a storm; on which account the sailors entered on that sea as sanctified, with fastings, prayer, and singing hymns to this day, says St Gregory of Tours.<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, intent on the actions of the son Constantine in his life, speaks not directly of the discovery of the cross, yet mentions it indirectly in the letter of Constantine to Macarius about building the church,<sup>3</sup> and describes the two magnificent churches which the empress built, one on Mount Calvary, the other on Mount Olivet.<sup>4</sup> The same historian says,<sup>5</sup> "In the sight of all she continually resorted to the church, adorned the sacred buildings with the richest ornaments and embellishments, not passing by the chapels of the meanest towns, appearing amidst the women at prayer in a most humble garment." Suidas adds, "She was affable, kind, and charitable to all ranks, but especially to religious persons." To these, says Rufin,<sup>6</sup> she showed such respect as to serve them at table as if she had been a servant, set the dishes before them, pour them out drink, hold them water to wash their hands; "though empress of the world and mistress of the empire, she looked upon herself as servant of the handmaids of Christ." She built a convent for holy virgins at Jerusalem, mentioned by Suidas. Eusebius adds that whilst she travelled over all the East with royal pomp and magnificence, she heaped all kind of favours both on cities and private persons, particularly on soldiers, the poor, the naked, and those who were condemned to the mines; distributing money, garments, &c., freeing many from oppression, chains, banishment, &c.<sup>7</sup> She beautified and adorned the city of Drepanum in Bithynia, in honour of St Lucian, martyr, so that Constantine caused that city to be called from her, Helenopolis. At last this pious princess returned

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Sacrae, lib. ii.<sup>2</sup> De Glor. Mart. lib. i. c. 6.<sup>3</sup> Lib. iii. c. 30; De Vita Const.<sup>4</sup> C. 43.<sup>5</sup> C. 45.<sup>6</sup> Lib. x. c. 7.<sup>7</sup> Eus. Vit. Constan. c. 44. Sozom. lib. ii. c. 2, &c.

to Rome and, perceiving her last hour to approach, gave her son excellent instructions how to govern his empire according to the holy law of God. Then bidding him and her grand-children a moving farewell, she expired in their presence in the month of August 328, or, according to some, in 326, which year was the twentieth of her son's reign, who on that occasion gave magnificent feasts at Rome during three months. Constantine ordered her to be interred with the utmost pomp with a stately mausoleum and a porphyry urn, the largest and richest in the world, which is now shown in a gallery belonging to the cloister of the Lateran basilic. He erected a statue to her memory, together with his own, and a large cross in the middle of a great square in Constantinople; he also erected her statue at Daphne, near Antioch. Her name occurs in the Roman Martyrology on the 18th of August, the day of her death.

This holy empress, and the great prince her son, paid all possible honour to bishops and pastors of the church. He who truly loves and honours God and religion has a great esteem for whatever belongs to it, consequently respects its ministers. Scandals in pastors, when notorious, are most execrable sacrileges; and circumspection is necessary that we be not drawn aside or imposed upon by any because, like Alcimus, they are of the seed of Aaron; but a propensity to censure rashly and detract from those persons who are invested with a sacred character is inconsistent with a religious mind and leads to a revolt. True pastors, indeed, in the spirit of the apostles, far from ever resenting, or so much as thinking of any slights that may be put upon their persons, or desiring, much less seeking, any kind of respect, rejoice and please themselves rather in contempt, which in their hearts they sincerely acknowledge to be only their due. Humility is the ornament and the ensign of the sacred order which they hold in the church of Christ.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 18 :*

ST AGAPETUS, a young Roman, martyred at Palestrina, twenty-four miles from Rome, about 275 : ST CLARE OF MONTEFALCO, virgin, born near Spoleto about 1275, a model of devotion and penance from her childhood : and ST HELEN, Empress, said by tradition to have been a native of our island. She discovered the true cross.

## AUGUST 19

ST TIMOTHY, ST AGAPIUS, AND ST THECLA, MARTYRS

(A.D. 304)

WHILST Diocletian yet held the reins of the government in his own hands, Urban, the president of Palestine, signalized his rage and cruelty against the Christians. In the second year of the general persecution by his order, St Timothy, for having boldly confessed his faith, was inhumanly scourged, his

sides were torn with iron combs on the rack, and he was at length burnt to death at a slow fire at Gaza on the 1st of May 304, giving by his patience a certain proof that his charity was perfect. SS. Agapius and Thecla, after suffering many torments, were condemned by the same judge to be led to Cæsarea and there exposed to wild beasts. Thecla was dispatched by the beasts in the amphitheatre: but Agapius escaped both from their fury and from the swords of the confectors on that day. He was therefore detained two years longer in prison, till Maximin Daia Cæsar gave orders that this confessor should be one of the victims to grace the festival unless he would abjure the Christian faith. His sufferings had no way abated his constancy, and the delay of his crown had increased the ardour of his desires speedily to join his companions in glory. In the amphitheatre he was torn by a bear, but not killed either by the beasts or confectors; and, wounded as he was, on the following day he was thrown into the sea. Both Latins and Greeks celebrate the memory of these martyrs on the 19th of August.

A glorious company of happy friends waits for us in God's heavenly kingdom! Innumerable legions of angels and all the saints who have lived on earth before us from the beginning of the world; so many holy kings, doctors, hermits, martyrs, virgins, and confessors, and several friends with whom we here conversed. They are already arrived at the safe harbour of eternal bliss. With what pleasure do we, with Agapius, raise our thoughts and eyes towards them, contemplating the joys and glory of which they are now possessed, and comparing with it our present state of conflicts, dangers, and sufferings! They look down from their seats of glory on us and behold our combats with affection and solicitude for us. We are called to follow them, and do not we redouble our desires to join them? do not we earnestly prepare ourselves by compunction, penance, divine love, and the practice of all good works, to be worthy of their fellowship? Do not we exult at the thought that we are very shortly, by the divine mercy, to be united to that blessed company and made partners of their joy, triumph, and glory? do not we sigh for that hour, and in the meantime despise from our hearts all foolish promises or threats of the world, and bear with joy all labours or pains that we may with the saints enjoy Christ?

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 19 :*

ST CUMIN, Bishop in Ireland, entered the monastic state early in life : ST LEWIS, Bishop of Toulouse, grand-nephew to Louis, King of France, and nephew on his mother's side to St Elizabeth of Hungary : ST JOHN EUDES : ST MOCHTEUS, Bishop, a Briton, a disciple of St Patrick, first Bishop of Louth in Ireland : and ST TIMOTHY, ST AGAPIUS, and ST THECLA, martyrs in 304.

AUGUST 20

ST BERNARD, ABBOT

(A.D. 1153)

[From his original life, in five books; the first of which was written by William, Abbot of St Thierry or Theodoric, near Rheims, his intimate friend; the second by Arnold, Abbot of Bonnevaux; and the three last by Geoffrey, some time secretary to the saint, afterwards Abbot, first of Igny, then of Clairvaux; all eye-witnesses of the saint's actions. To these five books Mabillon adds three others, containing histories of his miracles; one compiled by Philip, a monk of Clairvaux, addressed to Sampson, Archbishop of Rheims; another wrote by the monks of this monastery to the clergy of Cologne, drawn from the book entitled, "The Exordium, or, Beginning of Citeaux"; the third, compiled by Geoffrey, Abbot of Igny, addressed to the Bishop of Constance. Mabillon hath also given us the life of St Bernard, composed by Alanus, Abbot of Larivour, made Bishop of Auxerre, in 1153; fragments of another life, which is believed to belong to Geoffrey; and a third life written about the year 1180, by John, the hermit, who had lived with St Bernard's disciples. See also his lives, compiled by Mabillon and Le Nain.]

ST BERNARD, the prodigy and great ornament of the eleventh age, was the third son of Tescelin and Aliz or Alice, both of the prime nobility in Burgundy and related to the dukes, particularly Aliz, who was daughter of Bernard, lord of Mombard. Our saint was born in 1091 at Fontaines, a castle near Dijon, and a lordship belonging to his father. His parents were persons of great piety, and his mother, not content to offer him to God as soon as he was born, as she did all her seven children, afterwards consecrated him to his service in the church, as Anne did Samuel, and from that day considered him as not belonging to her but to God; and she took a special care of his education, in hopes that he would one day be worthy to serve the altar. Indeed she brought up all her children very discreetly and piously, and never trusted them to nurses. Their names were Guy, Gerard, Bernard, Humbeline, Andrew, Bartholomew, and Nivard. The other sons were applied young to learn military exercise and feats of arms; but Bernard was sent to Chatillon on the Seine, to pursue a complete course of studies in a college of secular priests who were canons of that church. He even then loved to be alone; was always recollected, obedient, obliging to all, and modest beyond what can be expressed. He made it his continual earnest prayer to God that he would never suffer him to sully his innocence by sin. He gave to the poor all the money he got. The quickness of his parts astonished his masters, and his progress in learning was far greater than could be expected from one of his age; but he was still much more solicitous to listen to what God, by his holy inspirations, spoke to his heart. One Christmas-night in his sleep he seemed to see the divine infant Jesus so amiable that from that day he ever had a most tender and sensible devotion towards that great mystery of love and mercy, and in speaking of it he always seemed to surpass himself in the sweetness and unction of his words. His love of chastity so restrained his senses that he never showed any inclination to the least levity or curiosity, by which the passions are usually inflamed,

and his body being kept always in subjection to the spirit, was readily disposed to obey it in all habits of virtue. The saint entered upon the studies of theology and of the holy scriptures at Chatillon. He was nineteen years old when his mother died. Her excessive charities and attendance in the hospitals, her fasts, her devotions, and all her other virtues, had gained her the reputation of a living saint. Having a great devotion to St Ambrose, she had a custom of inviting all the clergy from Dijon to Fontaines to celebrate his festival. On the vigil of that day, in 1110, she was seized with a fever, and on the festival itself received the extreme unction and viaticum, answered to the recommendation of her soul recited by all this religious company and, having made the sign of the cross, happily expired.

Bernard was then returned to Fontaines and now become his own master, for his father was employed at a distance about his business and in the army. He made his appearance in the world with all the advantages and talents which can make it amiable to a young nobleman, or which could make him loved by it. His quality, vivacity of wit, and cultivated genius, his prudence and natural modesty, his affability and sweetness of temper, and the agreeableness of his conversation, made him beloved by all; but these very advantages had their snares. His first danger was from his false friends and companions; but the light of grace made him discover their first attempts and resolutely repulse them and shun such treacherous worldly company for the time to come. Once he happened to fix his eyes on the face of a woman; but immediately reflecting that this was a temptation, he ran to a pond and leaped up to the neck into the water, which was then as cold as ice, to punish himself and to vanquish the enemy. On another occasion an impudent woman assaulted him; but he drove her out of his chamber with the utmost indignation. Bernard by these temptations was affrighted at the snares and dangers of the world, and began to think of forsaking it and retiring to Cîteaux, where God was served with great fervour. He fluctuated some time in his mind, and one day going to see his brothers, who were then with the Duke of Burgundy at the siege of the castle Grancei, in great anxiety he stepped into a church in the road and prayed with many tears that God would direct him to discover and follow his holy will. He arose steadily fixed in the resolution of embracing the severe Cistercian institute. His brothers and friends endeavoured to dissuade him from it; but he so pleaded his cause as to draw them all over to join him in his courageous undertaking. Gauldri, lord of Touillon, near Autun, the saint's uncle, a nobleman who had gained great reputation by his valour in the wars, readily came into the same resolution. Bartholomew and Andrew, two younger brothers of Bernard, also declared that they made the same choice. Guy, the eldest brother, held out longest, having greater obstacles which seemed to fix him in the



BERNARDUS ABBAS CLARAVALLIS



SAINT BERNARDUS  
Abbas Claravallis

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St. Bernard was the last of the Fathers of the Church. In this picture he is wearing the Cistercian habit. Joining the order at twenty-two he became Abbot of Clairvaux and one of the greatest preachers of his century. He had such a wonderful way with him that men, women and children were instantly converted; none could resist him when he talked about the love of Jesus, and for that reason he was called *Doctor Mellifluus*, The Honey-sweet Doctor.

world, for he was married and had two daughters; but his lady consenting and professing herself a nun at Laire, near Dijon, he also came over. Gerard, the second brother, was not to be so easily overcome, being a captain of reputation and full of the world; but being soon after wounded in his side by a lance and taken prisoner, he by serious reflection entered into himself and ran to join his brothers. Hugh of Macon, a very noble, rich, and virtuous lord (who afterwards founded the monastery of Pontigni and died Bishop of Auxerre), an intimate friend of St Bernard, upon the news of his design, wept bitterly at the thoughts of his separation, but by two interviews was induced to become his companion. They all assembled in a house at Chatillon, preparing themselves by suitable exercises to consecrate themselves to God in the most perfect dispositions of soul. On the day appointed for the execution of their design Bernard and his brothers went to Fontaines to take their last farewell of their father and to beg his blessing. They had left Nivard, their youngest brother, to be a comfort to him in his old age. Going out they saw him at play with other children of his age, and Guy, the eldest, said to him, "Adieu, my little brother Nivard; you will have all our estates and lands to yourself." The boy answered, "What! you then take heaven for your portion, and leave me only the earth. The division is too unequal." They went away, but soon after Nivard followed them; so that of the whole family there only remained in the world the old father, and with him his daughter St Humbeline.

Bernard was seconded in his resolutions by thirty noblemen and gentlemen, including his brothers, and after they had stayed six months at Chatillon to settle their affairs, he accompanied them to Citeaux. That monastery had been founded fifteen years, and was at that time governed by St Stephen. This holy company arrived there in 1113, and prostrating themselves before the gate begged to be admitted to join the monks in their penitential lives. St Stephen seeing their fervour, received them with open arms and gave them the habit. St Bernard was then twenty-three years old. He entered this house in the desire to die to the remembrance of men; to live hidden and be forgotten by creatures, that he might be occupied only on God. To renew his fervour against sloth he repeated often to himself this saying of the great Arsenius: Bernard, Bernard, "why camest thou hither?" He practised himself what he afterwards used to say to postulants who presented themselves to be admitted into his monastery at Clairvaux: "If you desire to live in this house, you must leave your body: only spirits must enter here"; that is, persons who live according to the Spirit. He studied to mortify his senses and to die to himself in all things. This practice by habit became a custom, and by custom was almost changed into nature; so that his soul being always occupied on God, he seemed not to perceive what passed about him, so little notice did he take of things, as appeared in several occurrences. After a year's novitiate he did not

know whether the top of his cell was covered with a ceiling; nor whether the church had more than one window, though it had three. Two faults, however, into which he fell, served to make him more watchful and fervent in his actions. The exact author of the Exordium of Citeaux relates that the saint had been accustomed to say every day privately seven psalms for the repose of the soul of his mother; but he one day omitted them. St Stephen knew this by inspiration and said to him the next morning, "Brother Bernard, whom did you commission to say the seven psalms for you yesterday?" The novice, surprised that a thing could be known which he had never discovered to any one, full of confusion, fell prostrate at the feet of St Stephen, confessed his fault, and asked pardon, and was ever after most punctual in all his private practices of devotion, which are not omitted without an imperfection; nor without a sin, if it be done through sloth or culpable neglect. His other offence was, that one day being ordered by his abbot to speak to certain secular friends, he took some satisfaction in hearing their questions and answers; in punishment of which he found his heart deprived of spiritual consolation. In expiation he prayed often prostrate long together at the foot of the altar, during five-and-twenty days in sighs and groans, till he was again visited by the divine Spirit. He afterwards, in necessary conversation, kept his mind so carefully recollected on God that his heart did not go astray.

After the year of his novitiate he made his profession in the hands of St Stephen with his companions in 1114, but with that perfect sacrifice of himself and disengagement of his heart from all creatures which is better imagined than expressed, and which drew on him the most abundant graces. He set out with extraordinary ardour in all his monastic exercises. The saint, not being able to reap the corn so as to keep up with the rest, his superior ordered him other work; but he begged of God that he might be enabled to cut the corn and soon equalled the best hands. At his work his soul was continually occupied on God in great fervour, and he used afterwards to say that he never had any other master in his studies of the holy scriptures but the oaks and beeches of the forest; for that spiritual learning in which he became so great an oracle was a gift of the Holy Ghost, obtained by his extraordinary purity of heart and assiduous meditation and prayer. The peace, humility, and fervour of his soul seemed painted in his countenance, in which the charms of a certain heavenly grace often captivated and surprised those that beheld him, though his face was emaciated and exceeding pale and wan, and his whole body bore visible marks of his austere penitential life. He almost always laboured under some corporeal infirmity, and his stomach, through a habit of excessive fasting, was scarce ever able to bear any solid food. He suffered all his distempers without ever speaking of them or using any indulgence, unless compelled by those who took notice of them. He often made a scruple

of taking on those occasions an herb pottage, in which a little oil and honey were mixed. When another expressed his surprise at his making such a difficulty, he answered, "Did you know how great the obligation of a monk is, you would not eat one morsel of bread without having first watered it with your tears." He used to say, "Our fathers built their monasteries in damp unwholesome places, that the monks might have the uncertainty of life more sensibly before their eyes." For monasteries were anciently built chiefly in uncultivated deserts, rocks, or swampy lands; though the monks in many places, with incredible industry, drained their morasses and converted them into gardens and meadows. St Bernard was a great lover of poverty in his habit, cell, and all other things; but called dirtiness a mark of sloth or of affectation. He seemed, by a habit of mortification and recollection, to have lost all attention to or relish of food, and often took one liquor for another, when offered him by mistake, so that he once drank oil instead of water. His chief sustenance was coarse bread softened in warm water. All the time which he spent in contemplation seemed short to him, and he found every place convenient for that exercise. He did not interrupt it in the midst of company, conversing in his heart always with God; but he omitted no opportunity of speaking for the edification of his neighbour, and adapted himself with wonderful charity to the circumstances of all ranks, learned or unlearned, nobles or plebeians. Though his writings are filled with holy unction, they cannot convey the grace and fire of his words; and he employed the holy scripture with so much readiness and so happily on all occasions that therein he seemed to follow the light of the Holy Ghost.

The number of monks being grown too great at Citeaux, St Stephen founded, in 1113, the monastery of La Ferté upon the river Grosne, in Burgundy, two leagues from Challons on the Saone; and in 1114 that of Pontigni, in Champagne, upon the frontiers of Burgundy, four leagues from Auxerre. Hugh, Earl of Troyes, offered a spot of ground in his estates whereon to found a third monastery; and the holy superior, seeing the great progress which Bernard had made in a spiritual life and his extraordinary abilities for any undertaking in which the divine honour was concerned, gave him a crosier, appointed him abbot, and ordered him to go with twelve monks, among whom were his brothers, to found a new house in the diocese of Langres, in Champagne. They walked in procession singing psalms, with their new abbot at their head, and settled in a desert called the Valley of Wormwood, encompassed by a wild forest, which then afforded a retreat for abundance of robbers. These thirteen monks grubbed up a sufficient spot and, with the assistance of the Bishop of Challons and the people of the country, built themselves little cells. This young colony had often much to suffer and, being several times in extreme necessity, was as often relieved in some sudden unexpected

manner; which wonderful effects of kind Providence St Bernard made use of to excite their confidence in God. These fervent monks, animated by the example of their abbot, seemed to find nothing hard or difficult in their extreme poverty and austerity. Their bread was usually made of coarse barley, and sometimes chiefly of vetches or cockle; and boiled beech-tree leaves were sometimes served up instead of herbs. Bernard at first was so severe upon the smallest distractions and least transgressions of his brethren, whether in confession or in chapter, that although his monks behaved with the utmost humility and obedience, they began to fall into dejection, which made the abbot sensible of his fault. He condemned himself for it to a long silence. At length, being admonished by a vision, he resumed his office of preaching with extraordinary unction and fruit, as William of St Thierry relates. The reputation of this house and of the sanctity of the abbot in a short time became so great that the number of monks in it amounted to one hundred and thirty, and the country gave this valley the name of Clara-vallis, or Clarval. It is now commonly called Clairvaux, or Clervaux, and is situated eleven leagues from Langres in Champagne. This monastery was founded in 1115.

St Bernard seemed to set no bounds to the austerities which he practised himself. William of St Thierry says that he went to his meals as to a torment, and that the sight of food seemed often his whole refection. His watchings were incredible. He seemed by his mortifications to have brought upon himself a dangerous distemper, and his life was almost despaired of about the end of the year 1116. His great admirer, the learned and good Bishop of Challons, William of Champeaux, who had formerly been a most eminent professor of theology in the schools of Paris, apprehensive for his life, repaired to the chapter of the Order, then held at Citeaux, and obtained authority to govern him as his immediate superior for one year. With this commission he hastened to Clairvaux and lodged the abbot in a little house without the inclosure, with orders that he should not observe even the rule of the monastery as to eating and drinking; and that he should be entirely discharged from all care of the affairs of his community. Here the saint lived under the direction of a physician, from whose hands he received everything with silence and an entire indifference. William, the saint's historian, paid him a visit in this situation, and in the description which he gives of Clairvaux says that the bread which the monks ate seemed rather made of earth than of flour, though it was made of corn of their own sowing in their desert; and that their other food could have no taste but what extreme hunger, or the love of God, could give it. Yet the novices found it too dainty.

After a year St Bernard returned in good health to his monastery and to the practice of his former austerities. His aged father Tescelin followed him, received the habit at his hands, and died happily soon after at Clairvaux.

In 1115 St Stephen founded the abbey of Morimond, in Champagne, though part of the refectory now stands in Lorrain. The four first daughters of Citeaux, namely, La Ferté, Pontigni, Clairvaux, and Morimond, became each a mother-house to many others which are called their filiations. Subordinate to the abbey of Morimond are reckoned seven hundred benefices, chiefly in Spain and Portugal, where five military Orders are subject to it, namely, those of Calatrava, Alcantara, Montesa, Avis, and Christi; but that of Clairvaux has the most numerous offspring. St Bernard founded, in 1118, the abbey of Three Fountains, in the diocese of Challons; that of Fontenay, in the diocese of Autun, and that of Tarouca in Portugal. He, about that time, wrought his first miracle, restoring to his senses by singing mass a certain lord, his relation, called Josbert de la Ferte, that he might confess his sins, though he died three days after. When the saint had confidently promised this miraculous restoration of Josbert, his uncle Balderic, or Baudri, and his brother Gerard, fearing for the event, were for correcting his words; but the saint, reproving their diffidence, repeated the same assurance in stronger terms; for the saints feel a secret supernatural instinct when, for the divine honour, they undertake to work a miracle. The author of St Bernard's life adds an account of other sick persons cured instantaneously by the saint's forming the sign of the cross upon them, attested by eye-witnesses of dignity and unexceptionable veracity. The same author and Manriquez relate certain visions by which the saint was informed in what manner some of his monks were delivered from purgatory, by masses said for the repose of their souls, and of the glory of others. They also mention that, in 1121, St Bernard founded the abbey of Foigni, in the diocese of Laon, in which the venerable bishop of that see made his monastic profession. The church of that monastery was exceedingly haunted by flies till, by the saint's saying he excommunicated them, they all died, and such swarms of them appeared there no more; which malediction of the flies of Foigni became famous to a proverb.<sup>1</sup> The saint, about that time, began to compose his works.

Being obliged to take a journey to Paris in 1122, at the request of the bishop and archdeacon he preached to the students who were candidates for holy orders; many of whom were so moved by his discourse that they accompanied him back to Clairvaux and persevered there with great fervour. Several German noblemen and gentlemen who called to see that monastery were so strongly affected with the edifying example of the monks that, after they had gone a little way discoursing together upon what they had heard from the saint's mouth and observed in his holy community, they agreed to return, hung up their swords, and all took the habit.

He received into his monastery monks who came to him from Cluni and other Orders that were less austere; but declared that he was most

<sup>1</sup> Longueval Hist. de l'Egl. de France, lib. xxiv. p. 474; Gul. vit. St Bern. c. 11.

willing to dismiss any of his own who should desire to pass to any other religious institute, out of the motive of seeking their greater perfection. So little did he think of the interest of his own body, which easily becomes a cloak to avarice and ambition, that he yielded to the Order of Premontre and others several good foundations which were first offered him. He was several times chosen Bishop of Langres and Challons, and Archbishop of Genoa, Milan, and Rheims; but so strenuously opposed the motion with entreaties and tears that the popes were unwilling to offer too great violence to his humility, and seemed with the whole world to stand in awe of his wonderful sanctity. In 1120 he was for a long time confined to his cell by a dangerous fit of sickness, and in the year 1125, in which, during a grievous famine, he had often exhausted the provisions of his monastery to furnish the poor with bread, he seemed by a dangerous distemper brought to the very gates of death. It happened in this fit of illness that he once appeared to those about him as if he had been in his agony and, his monks being all assembled round him, he fell into a trance in which he seemed to himself to behold the devil grievously accusing him before the throne of God. To every part of the charge he made only this answer: "I confess myself most unworthy of the glory of heaven, and that I can never obtain it by my own merits. But my Lord possesseth it upon a double title: that of natural inheritance, by being the only begotten Son of his eternal Father; and that of purchase, he having bought it with his precious blood. This second title he hath transferred on me; and upon this right, I hope, with an assured confidence, to obtain it through his adorable passion and mercy." By this plea the perverse accuser was confounded and disappeared, and the servant of God returned to himself and shortly after recovered his former state of health.<sup>1</sup>

Most affecting are the sentiments of profound humility, holy fear, and compunction which this great saint discovers. He tells us that he embraced God by his two *feet*, that of his mercy and that of his justice; to exclude, by the latter, sloth and presumption; and, by the former, despair and anxiety.<sup>2</sup> He declares often, in the most moving terms, how much he was penetrated with this saving fear which he nourished in his soul by having the divine judgments always before his eyes. "I am seized all over," says he,<sup>3</sup> "with horror, dread, and trembling whenever I repeat within myself that sentence, Man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred."

It is related in the Exordium of Citeaux that one day, in a conference which the saint made to the choir monks, he declared publicly that he doubted not but the humility of a certain lay-brother, then absent, gave to his actions a higher degree of true perfection than any one of the choir monks had attained to, and that this person, though perfectly ignorant of profane literature, was the best skilled in the science of the saints, the true knowledge

<sup>1</sup> Gul. a St Theodoric. lib. i. c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Serm. 28, in Cant. Totus inhorruí, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Serm. 6, in Cant.

of himself. For he was always condemning himself as a miserable criminal in the presence of God; and his soul was so entirely employed on his own weaknesses and imperfections that he saw nothing else in himself and only virtue in everyone else. St Bernard one day seeing him bathed in tears asked him the reason. The humble monk told him, "Miserable sinner as I am, I see all heroic virtues practised by my brother who works with me; but have not myself one degree of the least among them. I beseech you to pray that God will grant me in his mercy those virtues which through my sinfulness and sloth I neglect to dispose myself to obtain." Another lay-brother was obliged to watch the sheep in the fields all night on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, to which he had a singular devotion. When the bell rung to matins at midnight, condemning himself as unworthy to join his brethren in singing the divine praises, he turned his face towards the church, and, lifting up his eyes towards heaven, with a thousand genuflections and prostrations, continued till morning a repetition of the Hail Mary; every time with fresh ardour praising his Redeemer and imploring his mercy through the intercession of his virgin Mother. His humble devotion, simplicity, and obedience were discovered by God to St Bernard, who preferred his virtue in this action to that of the most perfect penitents and contemplatives in that house of saints.<sup>1</sup> True humility removes a soul as far from pusillanimity and abjection as from pride and presumption; for it teaches a man to place his whole strength in God alone. Hence sprang that greatness of soul and undaunted courage, with a firm confidence in the divine goodness and mercy, that astonishes us in the actions and writings of this saint. It would be too long to mention the wonderful instances of these and other virtues, especially of his devotion, tender charity, and ardent zeal. He nourished them in his heart by a spirit of prayer and retirement, the characteristic virtue of the monastic state. "Believe me upon my own experience," said he to those whom he invited into his Order, "you will find more in the woods than in books; the forests and rocks will teach you what you cannot learn of the greatest masters." Meaning that to learn the secrets of heaven and the science of saints, solitude, sanctified by penance and contemplation, is the best school. He severely condemns those monks who wandered out of their cells and, out of a love of the world and dissipation, intruded themselves into the ministry of preaching. To one of those he said, "It is the duty of a religious man to weep, not to teach. Cities must be to him as prisons, and solitude his paradise. But this man, on the contrary, finds solitude his prison and cities his paradise."<sup>2</sup> This saint, though charity often called him abroad, never left his cell but with regret; and amidst crowds his soul was interiorly recollected and often quite absorbed in God. When he had walked a whole day on the borders of the lake of Lausanne, hearing his companions

<sup>1</sup> Exord. of Citeaux and Le Nain, Hist. de Cit.<sup>2</sup> St Bern. Ep. 323.



in the evening mention the lake, he was surprised, affirming that he had never seen it and did not know that there was a lake there. St Bernard was particularly devoted to the Blessed Virgin, as his works sufficiently declare. In one of his missions into Germany, being in the great church at Spire, he repeated thrice in a rapture, "O merciful! O pious! O gracious Virgin Mary!" which words the church added to the anthem *Salve Regina*. The custom was introduced from this devotion of St Bernard to sing that anthem every day with great solemnity in the Cathedral of Spire. The same is done every Saturday in the Cistercian Order, and with particular devotion at La Trappe.

Notwithstanding St Bernard's love of retirement, obedience and zeal for the divine honour frequently drew him from his beloved cell; and so great was the reputation of his learning and piety that all potentates desired to have their differences determined by him; bishops regarded his decisions as oracles or indispensable laws, and referred to him the most important affairs of their churches. The popes looked upon his advice as the greatest support of the holy see, and all people had a very profound respect and an extraordinary veneration for his person and sanctity. It may be said of him that even in his solitude he governed all the churches of the West. But he knew how to join the love of silence and interior recollection of soul with so many occupations and employs and a profound humility with so great elevation. The first occasion which called for his zeal abroad was a dissension between the archbishop and citizens of Rheims, whom the saint reconciled, confirming his words by the miraculous cure of a boy that was deaf, blind, and dumb, which he performed in that city, as is recorded by the abbot of St Thierry. He opposed the elections of unworthy persons to the episcopacy or other ecclesiastical dignities with the zeal of an Elias, which raised him many enemies, who spared neither slanders nor invectives against him. Their commonplace topic was that a monk ought to confine himself to his cloister. To this he answered that a monk was a soldier of Christ as well as other Christians, and ought to defend the truth and the honour of God's sanctuary. By his exhortations Henry, Archbishop of Sens, and Stephen, Bishop of Paris, renounced the court and their secular manner of living.

After the death of Honorius II in 1130, Innocent II was chosen pope on the same day by the greater number of cardinals; but at the same time a faction attempted to invest with that supreme dignity Cardinal Peter, the son of Leo, who took the name of Anacletus. He had formerly been a monk of Cluni, was an ambitious worldly man, and so powerful that he got all the strongholds about Rome into his hands. Innocent II, who was a holy man and had been duly elected, was obliged to fly to Pisa. Upon this unhappy contest a council of French bishops was held at Etampes, twenty-five miles from Paris, to which St Bernard was invited. He

strenuously maintained the justice of Innocent's cause, who was recognised by the council, and soon after came into France. He was splendidly received at Orleans by King Lewis the Big. St Bernard waited on him and accompanied him to Chartres, where he met Henry I, King of England. That prince was at first inclined to favour the antipope, but was better informed by St Bernard and persuaded to acknowledge Innocent. The saint followed the pope into Germany, and was present at the conference which he had with the Emperor Lothaire at Liège, who recognised the lawful pope, but demanded of him the right of giving the investitures of bishoprics. St Bernard's remonstrances struck him dumb and made him humbly alter his resolution. His holiness held a council at Rheims in 1131, and went from Auxerre to visit Cluni and Clairvaux. At this latter place he was received in procession, as in other places, but without any splendour; the monks were clad in coarse habits, and before them was carried a homely wooden crucifix, and they sung leisurely and modestly hymns and anthems, not one lifting up their eyes or casting them about to see who was near them. The pope and several of his assistants could not contain their tears at the sight. The bread which was served at table was made of coarse flour that had never been sifted; the repast was made up of herbs and légumes; a dish of fish was got ready, but this was only for his holiness. The year following, St Bernard attended the pope into Italy and reconciled to him Genoa and some other cities. At length he arrived with him at Rome, whence he not long after was sent into Germany to make peace between the Emperor Lothaire II and the two nephews of Henry V, his predecessor: Conrad III, Duke of Suabia (who succeeded Lothaire in the empire), and Frederic, the father to Frederic I or Barbarossa, who ascended the throne after Conrad. The saint in this journey signalized every stage he made by the conversion of many sinners, and, among others, of Aloide, Duchess of Lorraine, sister to the Emperor Lothaire, who had for a long time dishonoured her rank and her religion by her scandalous deportment. St Bernard, having happily pacified the troubles in Germany, returned into Italy, being obliged by the pope to assist at the council of Pisa, in 1134, in which the schismatics were excommunicated. After the conclusion of this synod the pope sent him to Milan to reconcile that city to the holy see. He wrought there many miracles, and wherever he came was received as a man sent from heaven. He easily induced the Milanese to renounce the schism; and in all places and in all affairs succeeded to a miracle. The authors of his life remark that nothing was more admirable in him than his extraordinary humility amidst the greatest honour and respect imaginable with which he was everywhere treated.<sup>1</sup>

Having happily finished his negotiation at Milan, he returned to his dear solitude at Clairvaux in the same year, 1134, and after performing

<sup>1</sup> Lib. ii. c. 4.

his prayer in the church, made a most pathetic, affectionate discourse to his monks. He was soon after called abroad into Brittany; and afterwards into Guienne, where William, the powerful and haughty duke of that province, violently persecuted those that adhered to the true pope, and had on that account expelled the Bishops of Poitiers and Limoges. Gerard, Bishop of Angouleme, an abettor of the schism, encouraged him in these excesses. This William (who is styled Duke sometimes of Aquitain, sometimes of Guienne, which was part of Aquitain) was a prince of high birth, immense wealth, a gigantic stature and strength of body, and extraordinary abilities in worldly affairs, but was in his youth impious, haughty, and impatient of the least control. He seemed not to be able to live out of war, and was so shamelessly abandoned to his passions and lusts as to have kept his brother's wife three years by main force, glorifying in his iniquities like Sodom. St Bernard, in 1130, took an occasion to visit the monastery of Chatelliers, which he had then lately founded in Poitou, on purpose to have an opportunity of endeavouring to reclaim this prince from his scandalous disorders. The duke listened to him with great respect during seven days, and appeared to be much affected by his discourses on the last things and on the fear of God. Nevertheless, he was not yet converted. St Bernard, who had learned never to despair of the most obstinate sinners, redoubled his tears, prayers, and pious endeavours, till he had the comfort to see him begin to open his heart to the divine grace. When he abetted the schism, the saint by several conferences brought him over to the obedience of the rightful pope, but could not prevail upon him to restore the two bishops whom he had unjustly deprived of their sees. At length he had recourse to more powerful arms. He went to say mass, the duke and other schismatics staying without the door as being excommunicated persons. After the consecration and the giving of the peace before the communion, the holy abbot put the host upon the paten, and carrying it out, with his eyes sparkling with zeal, charity, and devotion, and his countenance all on fire, spoke to the duke no longer as a suppliant, but with a voice of authority as follows: "Hitherto we have entreated you and prayed you, and you have always slighted us. Several servants of God have joined their entreaties with ours, and you have never regarded them. Now, therefore, the Son of the Virgin, the Lord and head of that church which you persecute, comes in person to see if you will repent. He is your judge, at whose name every knee bends, both in heaven, earth, and hell. He is the just revenger of your crimes, into whose hands this your obstinate soul will one day fall. Will you despise him? Will you be able to slight him as you have done his servants? Will you?" Here the duke, not being able to hear any more, fell down in a swoon. St Bernard lifted him up and bade him salute the Bishop of Poitiers, who was present. The astonished prince was not able to speak, but went to the bishop and led him by the

hand to his seat in the church, expressing by that action that he renounced the schism and restored the bishop to his see. After this the saint returned to the altar and finished the sacrifice. A particular impulse of the Holy Ghost, the great authority of the saint, and the dignity with which this man of miracles was enabled to perform so extraordinary an action, make it an object of our admiration, though not of imitation.

The abbot, leaving the churches of Guienne thus settled in peace, returned to Clairvaux. But the duke, who had been a worldly and tyrannical prince, relapsed into his former habits and committed new acts of violence. The saint, being informed thereof, wrote him a strong remonstrance which, through the divine grace, made so deep an impression upon his mind that his conversion was rendered complete. Thus, by the prudence and zeal of St Bernard, was the schism extinguished in so many kingdoms; but it was still protected by Roger, King of Sicily and Duke of Calabria. The pope called the saint to Viterbo in 1137, and thence sent him to this prince. Bernard, in a public conference at Salerno, convicted Anaclet's partizans of schism, and brought over many persons of distinction to the union of the church; but Roger, having ambitious views to maintain the usurped possession of the duchy of Benevento, continued inflexible. The saint foretold his defeat in a battle he was preparing to fight with Duke Ranulph, whose forces were much inferior in number; and, taking leave of him, hastened back to Clairvaux. The death of the antipope, in 1138, opened the way to the peace of the church; for though the schismatics chose one Gregory to the papacy, he surrendered his pretensions to Innocent II. Hereupon Bernard sued to the pope for the pardon of those who had been engaged in the schism.

The saint saw himself obliged to exert his zeal also in maintaining the purity of the Catholic faith, which he employed so often and with such success in the support of its unity and discipline. He heard of no dangerous innovator in the doctrine of the church with whom he did not enter the lists. One of these was the unhappy Peter Abelard, or Abailard, in whose writings certain errors were discovered which were condemned in the council of Soissons in 1121; and he so far acquiesced in the censure as to cast his book into the flames. In 1139, William, abbot of St Thierry, discovered several erroneous principles in his later writings, and informed Geoffrey, Bishop of Chartres, who was legate of the holy see, and St Bernard, saying they were the only persons who could crush the mischief in its embryo. St Bernard wrote a strong letter of private admonition to Abelard, but was answered by insults and loud complaints. He informed Pope Innocent II of Abelard's errors and conduct by a long letter, and also wrote to several French prelates upon that subject. A council of bishops met at Sens in 1140 upon this affair. St Bernard was unwilling to appear, acquainting the bishops it was their business. Hereupon Abelard triumphed

and his friends said Bernard was afraid to encounter him face to face. The saint therefore was obliged to be present. But Abelard, who dreaded above all things the eloquence and learning of the holy abbot, only presented himself in the council to hear the charge drawn up by St Bernard out of his own book read against him; for he declined giving any express answer to the articles charged upon him, though he had the liberty given him to do it, had very favourable judges, and was in a place where he had no reason to fear anything. After having recourse to shifts, he appealed to the pope, and then withdrew from the synod with those of his party. The bishops condemned fourteen propositions extracted out of his works and wrote to Pope Innocent II, who confirmed their sentence, imposed perpetual silence on Abelard as a heretic, and ordered that he should be imprisoned. Abelard wrote an apology, in which he gave a Catholic exposition to several of his propositions. St Bernard accused him of denying the Trinity with Arius, of destroying the incarnation with Nestorius, of taking away the necessity of grace with Pelagius, of having bragged that he was ignorant of nothing; of being never willing to say of anything, *Nescio*, "I do not know it"; of pretending to expound inexplicable things, to comprehend incomprehensible mysteries, and to give reasons for what is above reason. It is manifest from his apology, and chiefly from his book entitled "An Introduction to Theology," which had raised this storm, that he advanced several propositions absolutely heretical; others which, though he expounded them more favourably, were new, harsh, and intolerable. One of the errors contained at this day in his writings is the system of the Optimists, renewed by Leibnitz, pretending that everything in the world being the best, God could not have made or done anything in any other way than he has done it. After he had published his Apology, he set out on his journey towards Rome; but stopping at Cluni, he was persuaded by the abbot, Peter the Venerable, to recall whatever he had wrote which gave offence, and to wait upon St Bernard. He did so, and was reconciled to him. With the pope's leave he resolved to spend the remainder of his life at Cluni, and behaved himself there with great humility and piety for two years. Towards the end of his life he was sent for his health to the monastery of St Marcellus, at Chalons, upon the Seine, where he died in 1142, being sixty-three years old. His body was sent to the abbey of Paraclet to be interred, and Peter the Venerable wrote to Eloisa an edifying account of his death.

Arnold of Brescia, his disciple, was not so happy as to imitate his repentance and submission. He was a native of Brescia in Italy, became a scholar of Abelard, took the habit of a monk, and falling into many errors, preached them at the head of armed troops, first in France and afterwards in Italy. He taught that neither the pope nor the clergy ought to possess temporal estates, and erred about several other articles of faith. St Bernard, by his writings and labours, opposed the ravages of this wolf in sheep's

clothing. St Bernard drew his portrait in lively colours when, among other things, he says, "Arnold of Brescia is a man who neither eats nor drinks, because, like the devil, he thirsts only after the blood of souls. His conversation has nothing but sweetness, and his doctrine nothing but poison. He has the head of a dove, but the tail of a scorpion." His description of Abelard is not less strong. He says he was a man always unlike himself, altogether equivocal and unconstant; that he had nothing of a monk but the name and habit, and that his life was the contrast of his character or profession. He adds, to express his vanity, that he knew everything that is in heaven and earth but himself. Another person of eminence in that age, by deviating from the scripture and tradition to philosophise on the mysteries of religion, adulterated their simplicity. This was Gilbert de la Poree, a famous professor of theology at Poitiers, and at length bishop of that city. He was accused of heterodox opinions by his two archdeacons. His doctrine was begun to be examined in an assembly of prelates at Auxerre in 1147, and continued in another held at Paris the same year, before Pope Eugenius III, who was lately come into France. St Bernard, on account of his eloquence and learning, was pitched upon to open the charge; but as Gilbert denied that he had ever advanced the propositions imputed to him, it was decreed that his writings should be examined and the decision referred to the council which was to be held at Rheims the year following. Four propositions of Gilbert were censured by this council, and he himself retracted and condemned them. On this account his person was spared. Some of his disciples continued to maintain his erroneous opinions, and are confuted by St Bernard. Gilbert died in 1154.

The heresies broached by Abelard, Gilbert, and many others at this time took their rise from an abuse of the scholastic theology, as Abelard himself acknowledged after his conversion,<sup>1</sup> making a long enumeration of errors which sprung up in his time. The holy scriptures and the tradition of the church being the sources and foundation of all genuine theology, St Anselm raised on them his excellent structure by bringing the different parts more into order under general heads, and illustrating each part with additional force of logical reasoning. This method was followed by all sound scholastics, especially St Thomas, whose divine science was derived from his perfect skill in the holy scriptures and in the writings of the most approved fathers; taking St Austin for his chief guide in questions of speculation, St Ambrose and St Gregory in moral resolutions, and St Chrysostom in the interpretation of the holy scriptures; he employs human reasoning with the most happy penetration, but so as to make it everywhere subservient to these principles; but these were quite lost sight of by some who, in the shoal of philosophers and theologians which appeared in the twelfth age, pursued, in many questions, only the subtle imaginations of

<sup>1</sup> Abel. Theol. Christian. lib. iii. and iv.

their own refining genius: a rock against which many great men have suffered shipwreck in faith. St Bernard opposed this fatal abuse with that erudition and eloquence of which his works are a standing monument. The Cistercian Order in its origin, like the Carthusians, was devoted to the practice of penance, assiduous contemplation, and the angelical function of singing the divine praises. Wherefore it did not admit the ordinary dissipation of scholastic disputations. Yet we find a foundation made for teaching little children in a monastery of this Order in the diocese of Bazas in 1128.<sup>1</sup> To encourage learning, St Bernard was very solicitous to furnish all his monasteries with good libraries.<sup>2</sup> The manual labour in which the Cistercian and Benedictine monks at that time employed themselves was not only to till the ground, but frequently to copy books; several beautifully illumined, which were writ at Clairvaux in St Bernard's time, are still shown there.<sup>3</sup>

The great reputation of the sanctity of St Bernard and his monks drew many great men to his Order. The monastery of Clairvaux, which is at present a most stately and spacious structure, was in his time a low and mean building; yet he left in it at his death seven hundred monks. He founded, before his death, one hundred and sixty other monasteries; and their number was so much increased after his death that before the dissolution of monasteries in Britain and the northern kingdoms, eight hundred abbeys were subject to Clairvaux, being filiations of that house. In 1126, Otho, the son of Leopold, Duke of Austria, and of Agnes, daughter to the Emperor Henry IV, brother to the Emperor Conrad III, with fifteen other young German princes, one of whom was Henry, Earl of Carinthia, made their monastic profession together at Morimond; in 1115, thirty gentlemen had done the same on one day at Citeaux; a company of young noblemen did the like at Bonnevaux; once at Clairvaux one hundred novices took the habit on the same day. The Cistercian annals and Le Nain mention two persons of quality who professed themselves lay-brothers in this Order, the one to be a shepherd of the monastery, the other, whose name was Lifard, to keep the hogs. In 1120, Alexander, a prince of the royal blood of Scotland, and in 1172, Silo, a learned and famous professor at Paris, and Alan, another professor in the same place, so renowned for his skill in theology and all other sciences that he was surnamed the Universal Doctor, humbly made their profession among the Cistercians in the quality of lay-brothers.

Evrard, Earl of Mons, was so touched with compunction for a sin he had committed in war in Brabant that in his return homewards from that expedition, having disguised himself in mean apparel, he set out at midnight and, unknown to anyone, performed a penitential pilgrimage to

<sup>1</sup> Nartenne Voyage Littér. in 1717, t. ii. p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. Littér. t. ix. ; Etat des Lettres, 12 Siècle n. 184, p. 141.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Rome and Compostella. After his return he hired himself, in the same spirit of penance, to keep swine under the lay-brothers in a farm belonging to the abbey of Morimond. Some years after, a servant of two officers who in the army had been under his command, coming to this farm to inquire the road, knew him by his voice and features, and in surprise went and told his master that their lord was there and keeper of the hogs. They rode up to the place, and though he at first strove to disguise himself, they knew him; and dismounting, embraced him with tears of joy and all possible tokens of respect. When they had informed the abbot, he came down to the farm and learned the truth from the holy penitent's own mouth, who confessed to him his sin with a flood of tears. The abbot persuaded him to take the religious habit, and to complete the sacrifice of his penance in the monastery. Evrard received the advice with great humility and joy, and, acknowledging himself most unworthy, made his monastic profession. About the same time he founded the abbey of Einberg in Germany and that of Mount St George in Thuringia. This happened in 1142. His holy death is recorded in the Necrology of the Cistercians on the 20th of March. The lay-brothers were at that time very numerous in this Order; St Bernard had a particular affection for them, and it seemed his greatest pleasure to instruct them in the interior paths of perfect virtue.

Our saint had, at Clairvaux, a monk whose name was Bernard, and who took his surname from Pisa, in Italy, of which city he was a native. He was a person of learning and abilities, and had made such progress in monastic perfection that when Pope Innocent II repaired and gave to St Bernard the monastery of the Three Fountains, commonly called of SS. Vincent and Anastasius, near Rome, the saint appointed him first abbot of the colony which he planted there. Innocent II died in 1143; his successor, Celestine II, lived in the pontificate only five months and some days, and Lucius II, who followed him, died about the end of his first year, on the 26th of February 1145. The abbot Bernard, of Pisa, was chosen in his place, and took the name of Eugenius III. St Bernard was struck with surprise at the news and wrote to the cardinals, conjuring them to assist him with their best efforts. Fearing lest so great an exaltation should make him forget himself and some of the high obligations of his charge, he wrote to him five books, *Of Consideration*, pressing upon him, without flattery, the various duties of his station, and strongly recommending to him always to reserve time for self-examination and daily contemplation, applying himself still to this more than to business. He proves to him that consideration serves to form and to employ in the heart all virtues. He puts the pope in mind that he is in the utmost danger of falling, by the multiplicity of affairs, into a forgetfulness of himself and hardness of heart; the thought of which danger made the saint tremble



for him and tell him that his heart was already hardened and made insensible if he did not continually tremble for himself. Most succeeding popes have highly esteemed and been accustomed often to read this excellent work.

King Lewis the Big died in 1137, leaving five sons besides Lewis, his successor; namely, Henry, a monk of Clairvaux, who died Archbishop of Rheims; Robert, Count of Dreux, head of that royal branch long since extinct; Peter, Lord of Courtenay, of which territory he married the heiress, from whom is descended the present family of Courtenays in France; Philip, Archdeacon of Paris (who being chosen bishop, modestly yielded that dignity to Peter Lombard); and Hugh, of whom we have no particular account. The father, after the death of his eldest son Philip, had caused Lewis to be crowned in his own lifetime; who thereupon, for distinction, was called Lewis the Young, which surname he retained even after his father's death. The Christians in Palestine were at that time much distressed. Pope Eugenius III, coming into France in 1147, held there several councils to promote a second crusade and, at the king's request, commissioned St Bernard to preach the holy war. This the abbot executed with incredible success in all the chief provinces of France. He afterwards did the same in the principal cities of Germany.

The authority of his sanctity and prudence was not less established in the empire than in Italy and France. When Lothaire II, Duke of Saxony, was chosen emperor upon the demise of Henry V in 1125, the two nephews of the late emperor (Conrad, Duke of Franconia, and Frederick, Duke of Suabia) raised a dangerous rebellion; but St Bernard prevailed with them to lay down their arms, and reconciled them to Lothaire, who ruled with great piety and tranquillity, treating even those that had been his enemies with mildness and generosity and protecting the holy see. He exceedingly honoured St Bernard, and died, without leaving any male issue, in 1138. Conrad III succeeded him in the imperial dignity. He on this occasion received St Bernard with honour, took the cross from his hands at Spire, accompanied him through several cities, and the same year set out for the Levant at the head of an army of sixty thousand horse and almost as many foot, the bravest that had been seen. King Lewis took the cross in an assembly of the princes and prelates of his realm at Vezelay, in Burgundy, appointed his prime minister, Abbot Suger, regent of France during his absence, and followed the emperor into the East. Manuel Comnenus was at that time Emperor of Constantinople, the son of John and grandson of that Alexis who had used the first crusade so ill. Manuel had some good qualities, but his policy degenerated into trick and treachery. Though Conrad was his brother-in-law, he received him at Constantinople with great coldness. The Germans crossed the straits and marched through Bithynia towards Lycaonia. Lewis passed the Rhine at Worms, and the

Danube at Ratisbon, and marching through Hungary, arrived at Constantinople in October, two months after the Germans. Conrad, deceived by guides whom the Greeks had given him, engaged his army in the deserts on the borders of Cappadocia, where his cavalry could not act. In this place the Mahometans surrounded his troops in the month of November 1147 and cut them to pieces, where not a tenth part of them were able to engage. Conrad, after paying a private visit of devotion to the holy places at Jerusalem, the year following returned in great affliction to Germany.

Lewis, passing into Asia, took his route by the sea-side through Smyrna and Ephesus, and advancing towards Laodicea, in Lydia, in the beginning of the year 1148, encamped on the banks of the Meander, a river difficult to pass on account of its depth and the height of its banks. He crossed it, however, with some loss; but beyond Laodicea, by the ill conduct of him who commanded the van, which he had separated too far from the rest of the army, his rear was cut to pieces. The king escaped with great difficulty. Pushing forwards, he left behind him a great part of his forces at Attalia, a seaport of Pamphylia, where they mouldered away in great want of provisions through the treachery of the Greeks. The king himself went thence by sea into the principality of Antioch and arrived in the port of St Simeon, in the mouth of the Orontes, five leagues below that capital. Raymund, Prince of Antioch, the queen's uncle, received him with all due honours. The scandalous amours of his Queen Eleanor at Antioch gave him great vexation. However, he laid siege to Damascus; but, through the jealousy of some Christian lords, this enterprise did not succeed. Wherefore the king, having performed his devotions at Jerusalem, returned by sea into Europe. He landed in Calabria, in Italy, and passing through Rome arrived in France. He found his kingdom in the utmost tranquillity through the wise conduct and steady management of Abbot Suger, who was honoured with the title of Father of his country, and had the chief share in the administration both in this and the preceding reign. This wise statesman had advised the king against the expedition; but when it was resolved upon, had most liberally concurred to promote it. The ill success of this crusade is chiefly ascribed by all our historians to the treachery of the Greeks; but the finger of God was visible in chastising the sins of the Christians. A great part even of those who composed the crusade were led by no other motive than the prospect of plunder, were lawless, and committed every kind of disorder in their march. To those who were conducted by motives of sincere penance and religion, these afflictions were trials for the exercise of their virtue. This unfortunate expedition raised a great storm against St Bernard, because he had seemed to promise success. His answer was that he confided in the divine mercy for a blessing on an enterprise undertaken for the honour of his divine name, but that the sins of

the army were the cause of their misfortunes.<sup>1</sup> The zeal of our saint was at the same time employed in the conversion of notorious sinners and heretics.

Henry, an apostate monk, a disciple of Peter Bruis, had spread in Aquitain and in the diocese of Mans the same errors which his master and others had propagated in Provence and Languedoc, deceiving and ingratiating themselves with the people by violent invectives against the pope, bishops, and clergy, which is usually the first step towards defection from the church. Cardinal Alberic, Bishop of Ostia, was sent by the pope, in 1147, legate into Languedoc and Aquitain to endeavour to apply some remedy to this evil. The legate took St Bernard with him in this mission, and the saint, not only by the reputation of his sanctity and the force and eloquence of his zealous discourses, but also by many evident miracles, animated the faithful and brought back to the truth many that were seduced. Geoffrey, sometime the saint's secretary, accompanied him at that time, and relates many miracles to which he was an eye-witness.<sup>2</sup> He tells us that at Sarlat, a town in Perigord, the man of God, blessing with the sign of the cross some loaves of bread which were brought to him for that purpose, said, "By this shall you know the truth of our doctrine, and the falsehood of that which is taught by the heretics, if such as are sick among you recover their health by tasting these loaves." Geoffrey, Bishop of Chartres, who stood near the saint, being fearful for the event, said, "That is, if they taste with a right faith, they shall be cured." But the holy abbot replied, "I say not so; but assuredly they that taste shall be cured, that you may know by this that we are sent by authority derived from God, and preach his truth." Accordingly a great multitude of sick persons were cured by tasting that bread. The same author assures us that when the saint lodged at St Saturninus's, a house of regular canons at Toulouse, one of the canons lay at the point of death, quite emaciated, and so weak that he could not rise from his bed, even on the most necessary occasions, but that by a visit and prayer of the saint he was restored to perfect health. Many other like miracles were wrought by the man of God at Meaux, Constance, Basil, Spire, Frankfort, Cologne, Liege, and other places where he preached, as the same author relates;<sup>3</sup> some in presence of the Emperor Conrad and his court at Spire, all publicly, persons of the first rank in the church and state looking on and confessing with astonishment that the hand of God was with his servant.

Fleury has inserted in his history a journal of this saint's miracles attested by ten venerable and faithful vouchers,<sup>4</sup> and Mabillon has proved their incontestable authenticity.<sup>5</sup> But we may regard his admirable sanctity

<sup>1</sup> St Bern. lib. ii. de Consid. et Ep. 288.

<sup>2</sup> Vit. St Bern. lib. iii. c. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Fleury, lib. lxxix. t. xiv. p. 628.

<sup>4</sup> Not. in St Bern. lib. ii. de Consid. et in Ep. 142, ad Tolosan.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. iv. Vit. St Bern.

as the greatest of his miracles. This, diffusing its bright beams on every side, was a light not only to his own disciples, but to the whole church. In 1151, Gumard, King of Sardinia, made a visit to Clairvaux, and was so edified with what he saw practised there that he returned the year following and made his religious profession in that house. In 1148, Pope Eugenius III visited the saint at Clairvaux, and afterwards assisted at the general chapter of that Order held at Citeaux, in which the whole Order of Savigni, consisting of thirty monasteries, passing into that of Citeaux, out of respect to St Bernard, became a filiation of Clairvaux. The saint had founded a monastery for nuns of his Order at Billette, or Julli, in the diocese of Langres, in 1113. His sister, St Humbeline, embraced this institute in 1124, and by the abundance of graces that heaven bestowed on her she arrived at so high a degree of sanctity as to be the admiration of all who saw her, and a subject of the greatest joy to her holy brother and director. She often watched almost the whole night in reciting psalms and meditating on the sacred passion of Christ, taking only a little rest on some boards. She was always one of the first at every duty of the community, and acquitted herself in a manner that edified the most fervent and inflamed those that were lukewarm. Thus she lived seventeen years. In her last sickness she was visited by St Bernard, and amidst his prayers and exhortations in sentiments of holy joy and humble confidence in the divine mercy, she breathed out her holy soul on the 21st of August 1141. Her name is commemorated among the saints.

In the beginning of the year 1153 St Bernard fell into a decay, with a loss of appetite and frequent fainting fits. He had long dwelt in heaven in desire, sighing continually under the weight of his banishment from God; though this desire he by humility ascribed to pusillanimity, not to charity. "The saints," said he, "were moved to pray for the corporeal dissolution out of a desire of seeing Christ; but I am forced hence by scandals and evils. I confess myself overcome by the violence of storms and through want of courage."<sup>1</sup> Such desires arising from pusillanimity would be a criminal impatience; but the vehemence of divine love was the spring of these ardent sighs in our saint, as he pathetically discovers in many other passages.<sup>2</sup> His distemper considerably abating, he ascribed this symptom of recovery to the prayers of his spiritual children, with whom he expostulated as follows: "Why do you detain a wretched sinner here below? your prayers have prevailed over my wishes; but have compassion on me, suffer me to go to God." However, he clearly foretold them that this delay would not exceed six months. During this interval the inhabitants of Metz having been attacked and defeated with great slaughter by certain neighbouring princes, they were vehemently bent on revenge. To prevent the shedding of blood, the Archbishop of Triers went to Clairvaux and

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 189.<sup>2</sup> Serm. 2 and 74, in Cant. Serm. 2, in cap. Jejun. n. 4, &c.

fell at the saint's feet, earnestly entreating him to undertake a journey to Metz in order to reconcile the parties that were at variance. At this call of charity the servant of God forgot his corporeal infirmity, and immediately repairing thither, prevailed on both sides to lay aside their resentment and overcome their former enmity by mutual benefactions and tokens of sincere charity and kindness. When he was come back to Clairvaux his distemper returned with more grievous symptoms. Seeing his spiritual children assembled about him all in tears, he comforted and encouraged them, saying that the unprofitable and unfruitful servant ought not to occupy a place in vain, and that the barren tree with good reason ought to be plucked up. His charity for them inclined him to be willing to remain with them till they should be gathered with him to God; but his earnest desire speedily to enjoy Christ made him to sigh ardently after the possession of Him who filled the whole capacity of his heart. Commending therefore his brethren to the divine mercy, he with inflamed sighs of compunction and holy love prepared himself for his last moment: in which he happily yielded up his soul to God on the 20th of August 1153, the sixty-third of his age, having been abbot thirty-eight years. He was buried before our Lady's altar at Clairvaux. His name was solemnly enrolled among the saints by Alexander III in 1165. M. Villefore has prefixed to the life of St Bernard his portrait, engraved from an old picture drawn from the life when the saint was sixty-two years old.

Sextus Senensis saith of him, "His discourse is everywhere sweet and ardent; it so delighteth and fervently inflameth, that from his most sweet tongue honey and milk seem to flow in his words, and out of his most ardent breast a fire of burning affections breaks forth." Erasmus gives him this character, "Bernard is cheerful, pleasant, and vehement in moving the passions." And in another place, "He is christianly learned, holily eloquent, and devoutly cheerful and pleasing." The Protestants, who oppose his doctrine, admire his piety and learning. Bishop Morton says of him, "In the midst of darkness, Bernard shone forth with the light as well of his example as of his learning." And Bishop Carleton writes, amidst many invectives, "I would to God we had at this day many, nay, but one such as it is certain and manifest Bernard was."

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 20 :*

ST BERNARD, Abbot of Clairvaux, the prodigy and ornament of the eleventh age; a writer on mystical theology : ST OSWIN, King and martyr, who founded the kingdom of Northumberland.

AUGUST 21

# ST JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL, WIDOW AND ABBESS

(A.D. 1641)

[Her life is written by Dr Henry de Maupas du Tour, Bishop of Pay, in 4to; also in 12mo by Mrs Louisa de Rabutin, who was married first to Monsieur de Daletz, and after his death to Monsieur de la Rivière. This work has been often by mistake ascribed to her father, Roger de Rabutin, Count of Bussy, famous for several juvenile loose productions of false wit, and more deservedly for his edifying repentance, by which he endeavoured to repair that scandal, and to live sincerely to God, after he had forsaken the court. See also her life compiled by Morsollier, Canon of Uzeu; and the lives of the first mother-superiors, and several other nuns of the Visitation, published in four volumes in 4to by sister De Chaugy, at Amerecy, 1659.]

THE father of St Jane de Chantal was Benignus Fremiot, one of the presidents of the parliament of Burgundy, famous for his loyalty to Henry IV in opposing the league; also for his great piety and the modesty with which he refused the dignity of first president, by which he showed himself the more worthy of that honour. By his lady, Margaret de Berbisy, he had three children: Margaret, who was afterwards married to the Count of Effran; Jane, who was born at Dijon on the 23rd of January 1573; and Andrew, who died Archbishop of Bourges. The president Fremiot was left a widower by the death of his lady whilst his children were yet in their infancy; but he took such pious and prudent care of their education that no assistance or instructions were wanting for forming them in the most perfect sentiments and practice of every religious duty, and for introducing them into life with advantage. Jane, who at her confirmation was called Frances, profited by them above the rest, and was most tenderly beloved by her father, who gave her in marriage when she was twenty years of age to the Baron de Chantal, chief of the family of Rabutin, then twenty-seven years old, an officer of distinction in the French army, and highly in favour with King Henry IV. The marriage was solemnized at Dijon, and a few days after she went with her husband to his seat at Bourbilly. She found a family which, by the absence of the master, had not been much accustomed to regularity, which she made it her first care to establish. She was very attentive to see that all her domestics were every day present at evening prayers and at mass on Sundays and great holidays in the parish church, on all other days at home. Regular hours were assigned for meals, and every employment and duty was discharged with great order, she being sensible that this is an indispensable part of virtue, to which few things are more fatal than the confusion of a disorderly life or family. During the frequent absence of her husband, who was obliged often to attend the court or the army, she scarce ever admitted any company and never stirred abroad, knowing how much this virtue is both the duty and the delight of a good wife, in order to watch over her servants, children, and domestic concerns, and to shun the snares of dissipation, levity, vanity, love of trifling,

and much loss of time, which insensibly sap the very foundations of a virtuous life and strike at the roots of a Christian spirit. This pious lady employed all her leisure hours either at her work or in the daily long exercises of prayer and pious reading which she prescribed herself. These devotions she at first much abridged when her husband was at home, at which seasons her house was usually full of company; but afterwards repenting of this loss of time, and always finding the spirit of piety much impaired in her by that dissipation and amusement or play, beyond what necessity might excuse, she resolved, in 1601, no more upon any such pretence to curtail her usual exercises; and from that time she so contrived matters as neither to omit any of her devotions nor to be wanting to any office which charity, courtesy, or other duties of her station in the world required of her. The Baron de Chantal was a nobleman of strict honour, and very religious. Nor was anything which the world could afford wanting to this pious couple to complete the happiness of the married state. But God, who would reign alone in the heart of our saint, prepared it for himself by the most sensible sacrifice.

The baron, in complaisance to a friend who was come to see him, went out one day a shooting; and as he had on a coat which resembled the colour of a deer, his friend, mistaking him for one behind the bushes, shot him in the thigh. He survived this accident nine days, during which time he received the holy sacraments in the most edifying sentiments of resignation and piety, and caused his pardon of the person by whom he had been shot to be recorded in the registers of the parish church, strictly forbidding any one to prosecute or bring him into trouble. He expired in the arms of his disconsolate lady, who was left a widow at twenty-eight years of age with one little son and three daughters; besides which she had buried two children in their infancy. Her grief is not to be expressed; yet she bore it with such an heroic constancy and resignation that she sometimes said she was surprised to see herself receive so grievous a shock with so great contentedness and equanimity. In her desolate state, offering herself to suffer whatever crosses God should be pleased to lay upon her, she made an entire sacrifice of herself to him with the most perfect resignation and a vow of perpetual chastity. In the depth of this affliction she found an extraordinary comfort and joy at the thought that she was now at liberty to give herself more perfectly to the divine service; and she repeated to God, "Thou hast broken my bonds, and I will sacrifice to thee a victim of praise."<sup>1</sup> The more authentically to testify her perfect forgiveness of him who had been the cause of her husband's death, she studied constantly to do him every good office in her power, and stood godmother to one of his children. According to the rules laid down by St Paul, St Ambrose, and other holy fathers, to sanctify the state of her widowhood she proposed to herself a

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxv.

new plan of life. She then received in her devotions many heavenly favours. One day, while she was earnestly begging our Lord to bring her to a faithful guide who should conduct her to himself, she saw on a sudden a man of the same stature and features with St Francis of Sales, in a black cassock, with a rochet and cap on, just as he was the first time she saw him afterwards at Dijon. Another time, being in a little wood, her soul was in a rapture, and she desired to get into a church that was near, but all in vain. Here it was given her to understand that divine love must consume all the rust of self-love in her, and that she should meet with a great many troubles both from within and without. Upon recovering herself, she found her heart in wonderful joy in the Lord, insomuch that to suffer for God seemed to her the food of love on earth, as his enjoyment is in heaven.

When the year of her mourning was expired, her virtuous and tender father Fremiot sent for her to his house at Dijon, where she pursued much the same manner of life, except that she sometimes received visits from certain grave ladies who were of an advanced age. A year after this she was obliged, by the affairs of her family, to go with her children to Montelon, one league from Autun, to live with her father-in-law, the old Baron de Chantal, who was then seventy-five years of age. Her patience was there put to a continual severe trial by the perpetual frowardness of the old gentleman and the imperious carriage of a peevish housekeeper, whose authority was absolute in the family. Jane never let fall the least word of complaint, nor discovered the least sourness in her looks; and her compliance in everything was cheerful and agreeable. But she gave most of her time to prayer, and on Sundays went to Autun, which was three little leagues off, to assist at sermons. It happened in the year 1604 that St Francis of Sales came to preach the Lent at Dijon, upon which occasion the devout widow made a visit to her father Fremiot, that she might have the opportunity of assisting at the sermons of that celebrated preacher and eminent servant of God. The first time she saw him she was much taken with his saintly deportment, and was persuaded he was the spiritual director she had long begged of God to send her, to conduct her soul in the most perfect paths of his holy love. Before she spoke the bishop knew her from a former vision, in which God had manifested to him this future vessel of his grace. St Francis dined frequently at her father the president Fremiot's house and, by hearing his familiar discourse, she conceived a great confidence in him, and felt extraordinary sentiments of devotion kindled in her breast. It was her earnest desire that she might be allowed to lay open to him the interior state and dispositions of her soul, but she was hindered by a scruple on account of a vow she had made, by the advice of an indiscreet religious man, her director, not to address herself to any other man than to himself for spiritual advice. She, however, took great delight in hearing St Francis's discourses. One day, the good bishop seeing



her dressed better than usual, said to her, "Madame, would not your head-dress have been neat without this lace? and your handkerchief been good enough without fringe?" The devout widow hereupon cut the fringe off upon the spot and the lace at night. The bishop, who knew that nothing is little that is done with a desire perfectly to please God, was much delighted with her ready obedience.

The perplexities about her indiscreet vow, the resolution of which St Francis referred to others, being at length removed, she made several confessions to him and a general one of her whole life. At the same time she suffered severe interior trials by desolation of soul and alarming anxieties about her conduct, under which she received great light and comfort by the wholesome counsels of St Francis. By his advice, she so regulated her devotions and other exercises of virtue as to conform herself in her exterior to the will of others, and to what she owed to the world whilst she lived in the houses of her father and father-in-law. This conduct charmed every one and made them say, "Madame prays always, yet is never troublesome to anybody." She rose at five o'clock, always without a fire, and without the attendance of a maid. She made an hour's meditation; then called up her children and went with her family to mass. After dinner she read the holy scripture for half an hour; at evening, catechised her children and some others of the village; read again and said her beads before supper; retired at nine o'clock, said evening prayers with her children and family; after which she continued a long time in prayer alone. In the employments of the day, and even in company, nothing seemed to interrupt the attention of her soul to God.

The more her soul strove by self-denial and assiduous prayer to raise itself above the world and its low concerns, its wings expanded and unfolded themselves, and she discovered new charms and a greater light in the heavenly truths of religion, which then seemed to have been folded and shut up before. The better to apply herself to these great means of improving her heart in the divine love, she began to entertain thoughts of renouncing the world. When she had disclosed this inclination to St Francis, he took some time to recommend the matter to God, and at length proposed to her divers religious Orders. Her answer only was, that she desired to embrace whatever state he judged most conducive to the divine honour. He then mentioned his project of forming a new establishment of a congregation of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary. The pious widow embraced the proposal with extreme joy; but the excessive grief of her aged father and father-in-law, the tender age of her children, and the situation of the affairs of her family, raised great obstacles to her design and gave her much to suffer. No one who lies under any obligations of justice to others can, without first discharging them, lawfully embrace any state incompatible with them. Such circumstances point out what it is

that God requires of a soul, and in what state or means her perfection is to be sought. Some pretended the obligation which Madame de Chantal owed to her children could not be complied with unless she remained with them in the world. St Francis evinced, on the contrary, that in a cloister she would be able to watch over their education with no less vigilance, and perhaps even with greater advantage to them, than by continuing always with them; and this, which it was her indispensable duty to provide for, she engaged herself still to do. After many violent struggles, this consideration of prudence being settled, her aged father and father-in-law gave their consent; but this they did with such floods of tears as would have shook a constancy less heroic than hers.

Before she left the world she married her eldest daughter to St Francis's eldest nephew, the young Baron de Thorens, which match was esteemed by all her friends very honourable and advantageous. Her two younger daughters she determined to take with her, and the one died in a short time in her arms; the other she afterwards married to the Count de Toulonjon, a nobleman of great virtue, prudence, and honour. Her son, the Baron de Chantal, was only fifteen years old, and him she left under the care of her father and of excellent tutors, and showed that his affairs required no longer her presence, except to superintend his education, which she engaged still to do, and promised for that purpose still to visit him, which St Francis likewise engaged that she should do. Her reasons had perfectly satisfied her father, father-in-law, and uncle the archbishop, who had long opposed her resolution; nevertheless, though they agreed that her design was a call of heaven and neither against the rules of prudence nor any other duty, yet the tenderness which nature inspired raised a fresh storm when the time of her parting came. Taking leave of her father-in-law, the old Baron de Chantal, at Montelon, she fell on her knees, begged his pardon if she had ever displeased him in anything, desired his blessing, and recommended her son to him. The old gentleman, who was in his eighty-sixth year, appeared inconsolable, and tenderly embracing her wished her all happiness. The inhabitants of Montelon, especially the poor who thought that in her they lost their all, expressed their grief by tears and loud lamentations. She made them all a short exhortation and recommended herself to their prayers. Thus she took leave of them, and being accompanied by the Baron of Thorens, his lady, her second daughter, and her son, and others, dined at Autun; but called on the way to engage a good religious man to omit nothing in helping her father-in-law to save his soul; and he kept his word. At Dijon she bid adieu to all her neighbours; then casting herself at the feet of her aged father, she beseeched him to bless her and to take care of her son, whom she left with him. The president, feeling his heart oppressed with unutterable grief and bathed in tears, said, "O my God! it is not for me to oppose your designs. It will cost me my

life. To you, O Lord, I offer this dear child; receive her and be you my comfort." He then gave her his blessing and lifted her up. Young Chantal, her son, ran to her, clasped her about the neck, and by the most endearing expressions endeavoured to prevail with her to alter her resolution. When he was not able to gain his point, he threw himself across the door. The holy widow stepped over his body, but returned again, shedding some tears. With a serene countenance she again took leave, checking the emotions of nature by reflecting that her resolution having been judged, after the most mature deliberation and advice, to be the call of heaven, it was her duty to follow it, and a happiness and pleasure to make to God an entire sacrifice of all that was most dear. Her journey to Annecy was prosperous; but she conducted the Baron de Thorens and his lady to their seat, saw them settled, then returning to Annecy, laid the foundation of her new institute at Annecy on Trinity Sunday, 1610, the holy bishop having provided there a convent for that purpose. Two other devout women took the habit with her, and were joined soon after by ten others.

The Cardinal of Marquemont, Archbishop of Lyons, having persuaded St Francis to change the plan of this congregation so far as to make it a religious Order, that it might be rendered of a more lasting continuance, the pious widow and her companions made their solemn vows in his hands. The holy founder would have the two sister virtues of humility and meekness to be the basis of this rule. "In the practice of virtues," said he to our saint and her religious sisters, "let humility be the source of all the rest; let it be without bounds; make it the reigning principle of all your actions. Let an unalterable meekness and sweetness in all events become by habits natural to you." He gave them excellent instructions on the great duty of prayer, that heavenly exercise being the chief fruit and end of religious retirement. Speaking of the adorable sacrifice of the altar, he said to St Jane, "The mass is the sun of spiritual exercises, the heart of devotion, the centre of our divine religion. Unite your heart in it with the church triumphant and militant, which joins itself here in one body with Christ, its sacred head, through him to draw down by a holy violence the mercy of the Father upon us." He inculcated to his spiritual children the necessity of mortifying the senses; for the flesh having been partner in the sin of our first parents, and continuing to be so in the revolt against the spirit, it is to be chastised, subdued, and crucified; and the senses, being the avenues of the soul, are the instruments by which the passions are inflamed, and these never can be governed unless those inlets be strictly guarded and curbed. Hence the obligation of exterior mortification is so strongly inculcated in the law of the gospel; neither can any one hope to obtain the mastery of his interior, and to possess or govern his soul, without this extrinsic succour. Yet St Francis did not enjoin by this rule any great austerities, that it might be accommodated to the weakest constitutions

and might be less liable to the danger of pernicious relaxations creeping in under the cloak of frequent dispensations. But then he pointed out a constant crucifixion of the senses by little denials; for he had observed the dangerous mistake of some who, professing austere rules, are so far strangers to the spirit of their institute and of their holy founders as to flatter themselves the extraordinary rigours they practise are to be compensated by other indulgences. Whilst under this pretence they allow themselves many liberties, they in a great measure forfeit the advantages of their other mortifications, and the senses, by being sometimes indulged with excess and delicacy, remain headstrong and untamed. Some degrees of relaxations on certain occasions are reasonable and necessary in all states; but a loose is never to be given to the senses in eating and drinking, or in any other point. If the rule prescribed by St Francis was in this respect milder than many others, and seemed more easy in practice, he on the other side allowed no mitigation in the essential interior mortification of the will and the passions. Many have the courage to renounce exterior things, as St Gregory observes; but very few can find in their hearts truly to die to themselves. For want of this, many who are virtuous and devout in appearance will be found to have heaped up nothing but false virtues, and often in their very fasts and prayers to have offered sacrifices which were abominable in the sight of God, because infected with the stinking poison of self-love; nor is it enough to banish self-will in greater vices so long as it is suffered still to fortify itself in smaller inordinate attachments. The least of these is a tie which fastens the soul to the earth, and an obstacle to the reign of pure love of God in her. This lesson St Francis strongly inculcates to his spiritual daughters. "We must die," said he,<sup>1</sup> "that God may live in us." He taught them that the principal means by which we are thus to die to ourselves are perfect obedience to superiors and entire resignation to the divine will, so as never to ask, never to refuse anything in diet or such temporal things; never to be disturbed or uneasy in any concerns. "You ask," said he again,<sup>2</sup> "what I desire should remain most deeply engraved on your mind. Ah! what shall I say to you, my most dear daughters, but these two words? Desire nothing, refuse nothing. For this document compriseth the perfect doctrine of indifferency of the will. Behold, the little Jesus in the crib refuseth nothing—cold, poverty, nakedness, the company of beasts, all the injuries of the season and whatever his Father permitted. Neither did he refuse those little comforts which his mother offered him. Even so we ought to receive equally all that Providence shall permit to befall us," &c.

By these excellent maxims did our saint regulate her conduct, and she never ceased to inculcate the same, both by word and example, to her religious sisters. She taught them by humility to love and receive well reprimands

<sup>1</sup> Entert. 20

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 21.

and correction; for our souls are spiritually sick and must rejoice to be pared and cut to receive their polish, suffering cheerfully the fire and the lancet of humiliations and mortification. The greatest mark of true humility and perfect virtue is, if a soul loves to be humbled and corrected. St Jane exhorted her nuns to complete in themselves, by a devout spirit of prayer, the work which they began by humility, obedience, and self-denial. She instructed them to repeat acts of divine love, a hundred and a hundred times a day, by ejaculatory aspirations, by them darting their affections towards God, and continually offering to him their hearts and all their actions. Being scrupulously exact in the least circumstances relating to the divine service, she taught all under her care the same spirit of religion. Once hearing a noise made in a chamber under the chapel whilst the blessed sacrament was exposed, to repair that fault of irreverence or inadvertence, she at dinner asked pardon of God for her sisters, kissed their feet, and dined on the floor, which is an ordinary humiliation and penance in many religious communities. When some of the sisters did not rise instantly at the toll of the bell for the divine office, she gave a public reprimand with many tears, saying, "If we reflect that it is the voice of God which calls us to pay him our homage, we should not loiter one moment." But a detail of her admirable lessons, and the edifying instances of her charity, meekness, and all virtues, would be too long for this place, but may be read in her life written by the Bishop of Puy, and again by Marsollier. Soon after she had made her religious profession, she desired to make a vow of doing in every action what she thought most perfect or most pleasing to God; which she did with the approbation of St Francis, who said he knew the constant fervour and perfection of her soul in labouring always to accomplish such a vow, which never can be allowed except to persons in whom the most perfect habits of fervour have taken the deepest root. This saint was afflicted with frequent painful sicknesses, and suffered for some time many grievous interior trials from a scrupulous fear of offending God. But it appears from the state of her interior, as she laid it open to her holy director, that she frequently received extraordinary consolations and favours from God. Her sickness seemed to her physicians sometimes to proceed from the ardour of the divine love with which she was consumed. In one of her letters to St Francis, she said, "The whole world would die of love for so amiable a God if I could make it feel the sweetness which a soul tastes in loving him."

The affairs of her children, after the death of her father and the foundation of many new convents at Lyons, Grenoble, Bourges, Dijon, Moulins, Nevers, Orleans, and Paris, obliged her often to leave Annecy. The very same year she took the habit, upon the death of her pious father, she went to Dijon and stayed there some months to settle her affairs and place her son in the academy. She afterwards procured his marriage with Miss

Mary de Coulange, a beautiful, virtuous, and rich young lady. At Paris she met with a violent persecution; but God strengthened and comforted her under it; and, by the example of her astonishing meekness and patience, rendered her the admiration of those who had been her most bitter adversaries. She governed her convent at Paris for three years, from 1619 to 1622. In the following year the death of St Francis was a grievous affliction to her, which nevertheless her perfect resignation to the divine will made her to bear with unshaken constancy. It was her happiness to bury his body with great honour in the church of her convent at Annecy. Her son, having prepared himself for battle by devoutly receiving the sacraments, was killed fighting against the Huguenots, in the isle of Rhé, in 1627, and in the thirty-first year of his age, leaving a new married lady with a daughter not a year old, who was the celebrated Madame de Sevigné. St Jane received this afflicting news, which drew tears from strangers, with such an heroic fortitude and entire submission to the divine appointments as astonished those that were with her. Upon any sudden affliction she used to offer her heart to God, saying, "Destroy, cut, burn whatever opposes your holy will." Her daughter-in-law de Chantal was snatched away in 1631, leaving her only daughter five years old. The very next day after she had received this melancholy news, she heard that of the death of her son-in-law, the Count of Toulonjon, whom she most tenderly loved, and who died at Pignerol, of which he was governor. Our saint neglected nothing to comfort the young widow her daughter.

By all her trials, and by her constant love and practice of the most heroic humility, patience, meekness, charity, and obedience, she laboured assiduously to overcome herself, and to gain and maintain an absolute ascendant of the superior part of her soul over the inferior. She never ceased inculcating to her religious sisters the necessity of continually renouncing and dying to ourselves, out of a great desire of pleasing God; for by this is the servant of God styled the strong woman, because she courageously and earnestly puts her hand to the most difficult task of conquering and subduing herself. "Our Saviour," said the saint to her nuns, "has annexed the prize of his love and of eternal glory to the victory we gain over ourselves. Your intention of coming to the Visitation is to disunite yourselves from yourselves in order to be united to God. It is a little field where, unless one die to oneself, there will be no reaping of fruits. The second point is, to suffer your hearts to be mortified, pared, and bent as is thought expedient, by obedience and an entire resignation of yourselves into the hands of those that direct you with perfect simplicity. Let them or the hand of God strike where you feel it most. If you resist, you cannot become the spouses of Christ crucified nor attain to perfection. On the contrary, if in good earnest you abandon and renounce yourselves,

you will find an incomparable sweetness in God's service, and it will be your delight to trample on self-love for the advancing of the kingdom of grace. It is the reward God promises to the conqueror. "I know one who has made an unspeakable progress by this method of overcoming himself in every respect; he is advanced in his way in a little time much further than many others less resolved in the business of self-denial." On another occasion our saint bitterly deplored the blindness and misery of many souls who practise exercises of devotion; but being of an unmortified and self-conceited temper, reap little benefit, but rather fall more easily into pride and imagine they are in a state to which they are utterly strangers. Being once consulted by letter about a religious person who seemed to live in great virtue and to receive extraordinary graces, she wrote back, "You have sent me the leaves of the tree; send me likewise some of its fruit, that I may judge of it, for I matter not the leaves. Now, the fruits of a good heart which God waters and nourishes with his grace are a total forgetfulness of itself, a great love of humiliations, and a universal joy and satisfaction in everybody's good."

Thus did our excellent directress of souls in the paths of virtue study first to draw them from themselves and to vanquish in them all inordinate attachments and evil inclinations, in order to carry them towards God, to whom souls which are perfectly disentangled from earthly things are wonderfully united by divine love, and its main source and vital action a spirit of prayer. As to the manner of holy meditation or prayer, she advised that persons be instructed how to excite pious affections and form good resolutions in that exercise, but would have them allowed to follow these affections according to their own devotion and the motions of the Holy Ghost. She exhorted strenuously to perseverance, and if distractions molest us, to make a prayer of patience, humbly and lovingly begging God to be our support and to inspire us with a desire of loving and praising him, and the like. To pray always is a lesson she often repeated to her religious, saying that the heart ought to be praying and loving while we are at our recreation, work, speaking, or resting; which is the meaning of the spouse when she says, "I sleep, but my heart watcheth." In a time of spiritual dryness, when she found her heart dull in its inward operations, she wrote a prayer made up of various acts of love, praise, thanksgiving, compunction, and supplications for herself, friends, enemies, sinners, the dead, and whatever she desired to ask of God; and this paper she carried day and night at her neck, having made this amorous compact with our Lord, that as often as she pressed it on her heart, it should express her intention of repeating all these acts with the utmost fervour of which she was capable. Of the same nature is a desire, by repeating Amen, to assent to and join in all the acts of love and praise which the heavenly spirits and all God's servants on earth offer without intermission, and in

the supplications of the latter. A pestilence raged violently two years at Annecy. The Duke and Duchess of Savoy endeavoured several ways to engage our saint to provide for her safety by flight; but she could not be induced to abandon her dear flock, and by her exhortations, alms, and prayers exceedingly alleviated the public calamity in that city. Her whole community was, by a singular providence, preserved from the contagion. In 1638 the Duchess Royal of Savoy called her to Turin to found there the convent of her Order. She was soon after invited to Paris by the Queen of France and, to her extreme mortification, was treated there with the greatest distinction and honour imaginable. In her return she fell ill of a fever, with a peripneumony or inflammation of the lungs, by which she was detained on the road in her convent at Moulins. There it was that, having received the last sacraments, and given her last instructions to her nuns, she with wonderful tranquillity died the death of the saints on the 13th of December 1641, being sixty-nine years old. Her mortal remains were conveyed with great honour to Annecy. Among several visions of her glory, St Vincent of Paul, who had been her confessor at Paris, was favoured with one, about which he consulted the Bishop of Paris, a judicious monk, and some other learned men. Though he carefully concealed the divine gifts and favours, yet, for the glory of this great servant of God, he left an authentic verbal process of this vision, but as of a third person. In it he says he had never been favoured with any vision relating to the glory of any other saint, and that he had always the highest opinion of the sanctity of this pious lady. He tells us that upon the news of her sickness he was praying for her with great earnestness when he saw a little shining ball, as it were, of fire rising from the earth and meeting in the air another larger ball of fire, both which mounted up to the heavens and buried themselves in an immense bright fire which, as an interior voice told him in a very distinct manner, represented the divine essence, and the other two balls the souls of blessed Jane Frances Chantal and St Francis of Sales. Soon after he heard of her death, and was struck with a sudden apprehension lest she might have committed some venial sin in some of the words she had spoke to him, though he always regarded her as a person accomplished in all virtues, and one of the most holy souls he ever knew. In this fear he prayed for her with greater fervour than before, and he was that instant favoured with the same vision a second time. From that moment he was fully persuaded of the certainty of her glory.<sup>1</sup> Several miracles are related by the Bishop of Puy to have been performed by her, some whilst she was living, others through her intercession and by her relics after her death. Among others he mentions a young nun at Nemers, in the county of Maine, who had been struck with a palsy and confined to her bed seven weeks in the most deplorable and helpless condition; but was on a sudden

<sup>1</sup> Collet. Vie de St Vincent, t. i. lib. iv. p. 342.



perfectly restored to her health and the use of her limbs by invoking this servant of God, who was then lately deceased. Whilst the community was singing the *Te Deum* for this miracle, another nun who was grievously afflicted with sickness, and whose legs were swelled to an enormous size, begged the like favour through the intercession of this saint, and found herself no less suddenly sound and well, so that the choir sung a second *Te Deum* in thanksgiving immediately after the first. Several other miracles were proved before commissaries and declared authentic in the process for her beatification, which was performed, and the decree published, by Pope Benedict XIV, in 1751, who commanded her name to be inserted in the Roman Martyrology. Clement XIV, by a decree 2nd September 1769, fixed her feast on the 21st of August.

The favourite maxims which this saint inculcated to her spiritual children regarded humility, meekness, and charity. "Humility," said she,<sup>1</sup> "consists in this, that when others humble us, we humble ourselves still more; when others accuse us, we add to their accusations; when we are employed in mean offices, we sincerely own it is more than we deserve; when we are cast by we are well content. A religious person cannot give a more evident mark of pride and incapacity than to think herself capable of anything. Did we but know how strangely those souls affront the Spirit of God that raise themselves or make ostentation by vanity, we should be ready to pray that fire might fall from heaven upon us rather than to be guilty of this vice. I wish I could engrave this maxim with my blood. I could wish my lips were bored with a hot iron, on condition that the mouths of the religious might be always shut against the least word that breaks in upon humility." The saint will have mildness to be so perfect by our assiduity in practising it with the most heroic dispositions that it become, as it were, the natural and constant frame of our souls, which no provocation must ever disturb. Our saint had a wonderful address in tempering corrections and reproofs with such tenderness and charity as to give no one uneasiness; also in concealing and bearing all personal injuries, and in repaying slanders, curses, and affronts with blessings and favours. Her exhortations to her sisters to bear one another's burdens, and to suffer nothing ever to cool the sweetness of their charity towards everyone, were most pathetic and earnest; and she often put them in mind in what school we are educated. "With whom," said she, "did Jesus Christ converse? With a traitor, who sold him at a cheap rate; with a thief, who reviled him in his last moments; with sinners and proud Pharisees. Ah! shall we, at every shadow of an affront or contradiction, show how little charity and patience we have?" She was ever inculcating how enormous the sin of speaking against one's neighbour is, especially where there is the

<sup>1</sup> See her maxims in her life by Maupas and Marsollier.

least shadow of envy or spite; and she often repeated that whoever were guilty of it deserved to have their tongues cut out, wishing that by the loss of her own she could prevent this foul sin ever happening among her religious sisters.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 21 :*

ST BERNARD PTOLEMY, founder of the Olivetans, born at Sienna, 1272 : ST BONOSUS and ST MAXIMILIAN, martyrs in 363 : ST JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL, widow and Abbess, founder of the Order of the Visitation Nuns, under St Francis de Sales : ST RICHARD, Bishop of Andria, an Englishman by birth, who turned his soul to God from infancy.

## AUGUST 22

### ST HIPPOLYTUS, BISHOP, MARTYR

[From St Jerom, in Catal. c. 1 ; Eus. lib. vi. c. 20 ; Photius, Cod. 121, &c. See Ceillier, t. ii. p. 316 ; Fleury, lib. v. n. 51 ; Rivet, Hist. Littér. de la France, t. i. p. 361 ; Le Moyne Var. Sacra, t. i. pp. 29, 30 ; Cuper the Bollandist, t. iv. Aug. ad diem 22, p. 504 ; Fabricius in Bibl. Grecâ, t. v. par. 1, seu. lib. v. c. 1, p. 203 ; Idem, in editione operum ejus Hamburgi, in two vols. folio, anno 1716 ; Jos. Sim. Assemani in Bibl. Orient. t. iii. par. 1, c. 7, p. 15.]

THIS primitive prelate and illustrious doctor flourished in the beginning of the third century. St Jerom says he was not able to learn of what city he was bishop; but Gelasius, in his book on the two natures of Christ, styles him metropolitan of Arabia. He was a disciple of St Irenæus, as Photius testifies, and also of St Clement of Alexandria and master of Origen. Eusebius and St Jerom assure us that he wrote comments on several parts of the holy scriptures, and by his example Origen was afterwards excited to do the like. A collection of his homilies was extant in Theodoret's time, who cites several of them; and also a letter which St Hippolytus wrote to the Empress Severa, wife to Philip, in which he treats of the mysteries of the incarnation of Christ and of the resurrection of the dead.<sup>1</sup> In his work against Noëtus, a considerable part of which is still extant, he clearly proves the distinction of the persons in the Trinity, the divinity of God the Son, and the distinction of the divine and human nature in Christ, for which his authority was afterwards urged with great force against the Eutychians. He wrote a chronicle down to the year 222, which work is not yet discovered in any Greek manuscripts that are known. His Paschal Cycle, fixing the time of Easter for sixteen years from the first of Alexander Severus, the most ancient work of this nature known, was published by Gruter, and with notes by Joseph Scaliger and the Jesuit Boucher or Bucherius. We have extant several fragments of the comments of St Hippolytus on the holy scriptures and his homily on the Theophania or Epiphany, in which he speaks chiefly of the baptism of Christ and of the wonderful effects of the sacrament of baptism. His treatise on the fast of Saturday; another, whether a Christian ought to receive the holy communion every day; his Hymns on the holy scriptures, his books

<sup>1</sup> Theodoret, Dial. 3. p. 155.

On the origin of good and evil, and against Marcion, and his book against heresies, with several other works, are lost.

St Jerom<sup>1</sup> calls St Hippolytus "a most holy and eloquent man." St Chrysostom and others give him the honourable epithets of "a source of light, a faithful witness, a most holy doctor, and a man full of sweetness and charity." Theodoret ranks him with St Irenæus, and calls them "spiritual fountains in the church."<sup>2</sup> St Jerom and other ancients style him bishop and martyr. The Martyrologies of the eighth age say that he was Bishop of Porto, which was the harbour of the city of Rome on the mouth of the Tiber, sixteen miles from Rome and two from Ostia, on the opposite side of the river: though both these cities have been long since destroyed, yet the titular bishoprics subsist among the six suffragans of Rome. Le Moyne conjectures this to have been a mistake of Porto for Aden, formerly called Portus Romanus, in Arabia, because it was frequented by the Romans who came into those parts, as the port of the Persian merchants was on the opposite gulf, as Philostorgius informs us; but it nowhere appears that Aden, or the Roman port in Africa, ever was a bishop's see. Nor does it occur in any ancient list. See Commanville's accurate Tables, p. 282. Those of Miræus and Charles a St Paulo, in Geogr. Sacra, p. 295; and the conjecture of Le Moyne seems more ingenious than solid. It is therefore uncertain of what see he was bishop, which neither Eusebius nor St Jerom could learn, though Gelasius seems to place it under the metropolitan of Bosra in Arabia, as F. Cuper proves. That he flourished in the East is clear, otherwise Origen could not have been his scholar; but he passed some time in the West; for his cycles are calculated after the manner of the Latins, not after that of the Alexandrians and other Orientals. He must have been a disciple of St Irenæus at Lyons, and probably after his martyrdom returned into the East, taught, and was made bishop there; but the testimonies of ancient Martyrologies of the eighth century, the tradition of the church of Porto, and the statue of this saint found at Rome, seem to prove that he came from Arabia into Italy, or received a glorious crown of martyrdom probably in that country. Several Oriental calendars say the manner of his martyrdom was drowning. Baronius tells us that at his time a well was shown at Porto in which he was said to have been drowned, and near it a church which bore his name, which had formerly been most famous, but was then decaying; it is now in ruins. It appears from Anastasius the Librarian, in the life of Leo III, that this pope gave rich garments to cover the martyr's body in this church. This, however, may have been some other martyr of the same name, for there are several; and the statue proves only that there might have been a chapel or altar erected there in honour of this illustrious bishop and martyr. So that we dare not positively conclude either that he

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Dial. 3.

is the martyr Hippolytus of Porto, or that Italy was the theatre of his martyrdom, though this seems probable.

The writings of St Hippolytus show how careful the primitive Christians were to have the divine judgment constantly before their eyes, which St John Climacus describes to be the character of the true servant of God.<sup>1</sup> By this means they maintained themselves always in fear and compunction; solicitous, watchful, and timorous in all their actions. By this they were animated to despise a false and transitory world, and to suffer with joy all torments and every barbarous kind of death rather than to consent to sin; especially in time of temptation this consideration was their shield and fence, according to the rule which St Basil, the great master of a spiritual life, lays down: <sup>2</sup> "If ever you are tempted to sin, call to mind the terrible tribunal of God, at which all men must appear." The Greeks and Æthiopians honour St Hippolytus the bishop on the 29th of our January, the Latins on the 22nd or 23rd of August.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 22 :*

ST ANDREW, deacon, a Scottish or Irish gentleman who in his youth attended St Donatus into Tuscany, to serve God: ST HIPPOLYTUS, a primitive prelate and illustrious Doctor of the Church, who flourished at the beginning of the third century: THE VENERABLE JOHN KEMBLE, English martyr: ST PHILLIBERT, first Abbot of Jumieges and Nermoutier: BLESSED RICHARD KIRKMAN, martyr: ST SYMPHORIAN, suffered in Gaul in the reign of Marcus Aurelian: ST TIMOTHY, who preached for about a year in Rome and was then beheaded by order of the tyrant Maxentius, 311: and BLESSED WILLIAM LACY, martyr.

AUGUST 23

ST PHILIP BENITI, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 1285)

[From the Annals of the Order of Servites, compiled by Giani, with the notes of Garbi, printed at Lucca, in 1719, in two vols., fol., and the notes of F. Cuper, the Bollandist, Augusti, t. iv p. 654. Also from Paulus Florentinus in his Dialogues, De Origine Servorum B. Mariæ V., published in the Deliciæ Eruditorum, Romæ, 1754, t. x.; and Chronicon Rerum Ordinis Servorum B. M. V. a Fr. Mich. Florentino. Florentiæ, 1567, 4to.]

ST PHILIP BENITI or BENIZI, the principal ornament and propagator of the religious Order of the Servites in Italy, was descended of the noble family of Benizi, in Florence, and a native of that city. His virtuous parents were well persuaded that the right or wrong state of human nature depends as necessarily upon the education of children as that of a plant upon proper culture; and that the whole of this art consists, not only in strengthening the body by suitable exercise, and opening and improving the faculties of the mind by proper studies, but above all by forming in youth strong and lasting habits, and inspiring them with the most noble sentiments of all virtues. Through their care, assisted by a special grace, Philip preserved

<sup>1</sup> Grad. 7.

<sup>2</sup> In Ps. xxxiii.

his soul untainted by vice and the world, and daily advanced in the fear of God. Having gone through the studies of humanity in his own country, he was sent to Paris to apply himself to the study of medicine, in which charity was his motive. From Paris he removed to Padua, where he pursued the same studies and took the degree of doctor, which then was the same in that faculty as in arts.<sup>1</sup> After his return to Florence he took some time to deliberate with himself what course to steer, earnestly begging God to direct him into the path in which he should most perfectly fulfil his divine will.

The religious order of Servites, or servants of God under the special patronage of the Blessed Virgin, had been instituted in that country fifteen years before. Seven very rich merchants of Florence had laid the foundation of this institute, having by mutual agreement retired to Monte Senario, six miles from that city. They lived there in little cells, something like the hermits of Camaldoli, possessing nothing but in common and professing obedience to Bonfilio Monaldi, whom they chose superior. The austerities which they practised were exceeding great, and they lived in a great measure on alms. Bonfilio Monaldi, the first superior of this fervent company, at the request of certain pious persons, founded a small convent near one of the gates of Florence, with a chapel under the title of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin. St Philip happening to hear mass in this chapel on Thursday in Easter week was strongly affected with the words of the Holy Ghost to the deacon Philip, which were read in the epistle of that day,<sup>2</sup> "Draw near, and join thyself to the chariot." His name being Philip, he applied to himself these words of the Holy Ghost as an invitation to put himself under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin in that Order. The night following he seemed to himself in a dream or vision to be in a vast wilderness (representing the world) full of precipices, rocks, flint stones, briars, snares, and venomous serpents, so that he did not see how it was possible for him to escape so many dangers. Whilst he was in the utmost dread and consternation, he thought he beheld the Blessed Virgin seated in a chariot calling him to this new Order. The next day Philip revolved in his mind that great watchfulness and an extraordinary grace are requisite to discover every lurking rock or sand in the course of life in the world, and he was persuaded that God called him to this Order, established under the patronage of his Mother, as to a place of refuge. Accordingly he repaired to the little chapel where he had heard mass, and was admitted by F. Bonfilio to the habit, in quality of lay-brother, that state being more agreeable to his humility. He made his religious vows on the 8th of September in 1233, and was sent by his superior to Monte Senario, there to work at every kind of hard country labour. The saint cheerfully applied himself to it in a perfect spirit of penance, but accompanied his

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Littéraire, t. ix. p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii. 29.

work with constant recollection and fervent prayer; and all his spare hours he devoted to this holy exercise in a little cave behind the church; where, inebriated with heavenly delights and in ecstasies of divine love, he often forgot the care which he owed to his body. He most industriously concealed his learning and talents till they were at length discovered; in the meantime those who conversed with him admired the heavenly prudence and light with which he spoke on spiritual things. He was charged with the care of a new convent that was founded at Sienna, where he undesignedly displayed his abilities in a discourse on certain controverted points in presence of two learned Dominicans and others, to the great astonishment of those that heard him. The superiors of his Order were hereupon engaged by others to draw this bright light from under the bushel and to place it on the candlestick. Having therefore obtained a dispensation of his holiness, they took care to have him promoted to holy orders, though nothing but their absolute command could extort the humble saint's consent to such a step. He was soon after made definitor, then assistant to the general, and in 1267 the fifth general of his Order.

Upon the death of Clement IV the cardinals assembled at Viterbo began to cast their eyes on him to raise him to the apostolic chair. Having intelligence of this design, in the greatest alarm he retired into the mountains with only one religious companion, and lay concealed there till Gregory X was chosen. He rejoiced to find in this retreat an opportunity of redoubling the macerations of his body, and giving himself up to the sweet exercise of heavenly contemplation. All this time he lived chiefly on dry herbs and drank at a fountain, since esteemed miraculous and called St Philip's bath, situate on a mountain named Montagnate. He returned from the desert glowing with holy zeal, to kindle in the hearts of Christians the fire of divine love. After preaching in many parts of Italy, he appointed a vicar-general there to govern his Order, and with two religious companions undertook an extensive mission, preaching with great fruit at Avignon, Toulouse, Paris, and in other great cities in France; also in Flanders, Friesland, Saxony, and Higher Germany. After two years' absence he came back to hold the general chapter of his Order at Borgo in 1274, in which he used all his endeavours to be released from the burden of the generalship; but was so far from being heard that he was confirmed in that dignity for life. Indeed, no one was more worthy of it than he who most sincerely judged himself to be, of all persons living, the most unworthy. In the same year he repaired to the second general council of Lyons, from which he obtained the confirmation of his Order, Pope Gregory X presiding there in person. The saint announced the word of God wherever he came, and had an extraordinary talent in converting sinners and in reconciling those that were at variance. Italy was at that time horribly divided by intestine discords and

hereditary factions, particularly those of the Guelphs and Gibellins. Holy men often sought to apply remedies to these quarrels, which had a happy effect upon some; but in many these discords, like a wound ill cured, broke out again with worse symptoms than ever. St Philip wonderfully pacified the factions when they were ready to tear each other to pieces at Pistoia, and in many other places. He succeeded at length also at Forli, but not without first exposing himself to many dangers. The seditious insulted and beat him in every part of the city; but his invincible patience at length disarmed their fury and vanquished them. St Peregrinus Latiozi, who was their ringleader, and had himself struck the saint, was so powerfully moved by the example of his meekness and sanctity that he threw himself at his feet and with many tears begged his pardon and prayers. Being become a perfect model of penitents, he was received by him into the Order of Servites at Sienna, and continued his penance in sackcloth and ashes to his happy death in the eightieth year of his age. So evident were his miracles and other tokens of his heroic sanctity and perseverance that he was canonized by Benedict XIII in 1726.

St Philip made the sanctification of his religious brethren the primary object of his zeal, as it was the first part of his charge. Nor was he a stranger to the maxim which the zealous reformer of La Trappe so strenuously inculcated,<sup>1</sup> that a religious community in which regular discipline is enervated, and those who profess the Order are strangers to its true spirit, is not a harbour or place of refuge, but a shipwreck of souls. Scarce could a saint be able to resist such a torrent of example or the poison of such an air in which, as in a pest-house, everyone is confined. Though gross crimes of the world are shut out, the want of the religious spirit and a neglect of the particular duties of that heroic state are enough to damn souls. To preserve his family from so fatal a misfortune, our saint never ceased to watch and pray.

Judging at length by the decay of his health that the end of his life drew near, he set out to make the visitation of the convents of his Order at Florence, Sienna, Perugia, and other places. Arriving at Todi, he went straight to the altar of our Lady, and falling prostrate on the ground prayed with great fervour, and said, "This is the place of my rest for ever." The day following he made a moving sermon on the glory of the blessed. His disorder manifested itself by a sharp fever on the feast of the Assumption of the Mother of God. The time of his sickness he employed in admirable sentiments of compunction, and on the octave day falling into his agony he called for his book, by which word he usually meant his crucifix and, devoutly contemplating it, calmly expired. To give place to the octave of the Assumption, his feast is kept on the following day, the twenty-third of

<sup>1</sup> Abbé Rancé, *Maximes et Oblig. de l'Etat Relig.*, &c.

the month. He was canonized by Clement X in 1671; but the bull was only published by Benedict XIII in 1724.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 23 :*

ST APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS, Bishop of Clermont, 431 ; thought it his main duty to instruct, comfort, and assist the poor : ST CLAUDIUS, ST ASTERIUS, ST NEON, ST DOMNINA, and ST THEONILLA, martyrs, heroically steadfast under their torments : ST EUGENIUS, first Bishop of Derry : ST JUSTINIAN, hermit and martyr ; a young nobleman who, passing into Wales, led an eremitical life near Minevia ; St David honoured him living and translated his relics : ST PHILIP BENITI or BENIZI, the ornament and principal propagator of the Servites in Italy : and ST THEONAS, Archbishop of Alexandria for nearly nineteen years.

## AUGUST 24

### ST BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE

THE name here given to this apostle is not his proper but patronymical name: and imports the son of Tholomew or Tolmai, like Barjona and Bartimeus. Rupertus, Jansenius, and several other learned interpreters of the holy scripture take this apostle to have been the same person with Nathaniel, a native of Cana, in Galilee, a doctor in the Jewish law and one of the seventy-two disciples of Christ, to whom he was conducted by St Philip, and whose innocence and simplicity of heart deserved to be celebrated with the highest eulogium by the divine mouth of our Redeemer.<sup>1</sup> Bartholomew Gavant, the learned commentator on the Rubrics of the Roman Missal and Breviary, has endeavoured by an express dissertation to prove this conjecture. F. Stilling, the Bollandist, has undertaken to confirm this opinion more at large.<sup>2</sup> For whereas St John never mentions Bartholomew among the apostles, so the other three evangelists take no notice of the name of Nathaniel; and they constantly put together Philip and Bartholomew, as St John says Philip and Nathaniel came together to Christ. Also Nathaniel is reckoned with other apostles when Christ appeared to them at the sea of Galilee after his resurrection:<sup>3</sup> and if he had not already belonged to that sacred college, why was he not propounded a candidate for the apostleship to fill the vacant place of Judas?

St Bartholomew was chosen by Christ one of his twelve apostles when he formed that sacred college.<sup>4</sup> He was with them witness of our Lord's glorious resurrection and his other principal actions on earth, and was instructed in his divine school and from his sacred mouth. He is mentioned among the other disciples who were met together joining in devout prayer after Christ's ascension, and he received the Holy Ghost with the rest. Having been prepared by the example and instructions of our Redeemer, and by humble and fervent prayer, he was replenished, in the descent of the Holy Ghost, with an heroic spirit of humility, mortification and contempt of the world, compunction, prayer, holy zeal, and burning charity. Thus armed and filled with the eminent spirit of all virtues, twelve apostles

<sup>1</sup> John i. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Augusti, t. iv. p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> John xxi. 2

<sup>4</sup> Matt. x. 3.



converted many great nations to Christ, and carried the sound of his name into the remotest corners of the earth. How comes it that nowadays the apostolical labours of so many ministers of the divine word produce so little fruit? One great reason of this difference is their neglect to obtain of God a large share in the spirit of the apostles. Their success and the influence of their words upon the hearts of men depend not upon human prudence, eloquence, and abilities; the principal instrument of God's grace in multiplying the fruit of his word in the hearts of men is the spirit with which it is announced by those whom he honours with the ministry.

St Bartholomew, being eminently qualified by the divine grace to discharge the functions of an apostle, carried the gospel through the most barbarous countries of the East, penetrating into the remoter Indies, as Eusebius<sup>1</sup> and other ancient writers testify. By the name of Indies the ancients sometimes meant only Arabia and Persia; but here they speak of proper India; for they make mention of the Brachmans of that country, famous over the whole world for their pretended skill in philosophy and in the superstitious mysteries of their idolatry. Eusebius relates that St Pantænus, about the beginning of the third century, going into the Indies to confute their Brachmans, found there some who still retained the knowledge of Christ, and showed him a copy of St Matthew's gospel in Hebrew. which they assured him that St Bartholomew had brought into those parts when he planted the faith among them. This apostle returned again into the north-west parts of Asia, and met St Philip at Hierapolis, in Phrygia. Hence he travelled into Lycaonia, where St Chrysostom affirms that he instructed the people in the Christian faith; but we know not even the names of many of the countries to which he preached. We are struck with astonishment when we call to mind how many prisons the apostles sanctified, how many dangers they braved, how many vast regions they travelled over, and how many nations they conquered to Christ; but if we admire their courage, zeal, and labours, we have still greater reason to wonder and be confounded at our supine sloth and insensibility, who do nothing for the enlargement of God's kingdom in others, or even for the sanctification of our own souls. It is not owing to the want of means or of strength through the divine grace, but to the want of courage and sincere resolution that we do so little; that we find no opportunities for exercising charity towards our neighbour, no time for prayer and recollection of spirit. no strength for the practice of fasting and penance. If we examine into the truth we shall find that we blind ourselves by vain pretences, and that sloth, tepidity, and indifferency have many hindrances which fervour, resolution, industry, and contrivance find ways readily to remove. The apostles, who did and suffered so much for God, still sincerely called themselves unprofitable servants, made no account of their labours, and were

<sup>1</sup> IJb. v. c. 10.

altogether taken up with the thoughts of what they owed to God and how infinitely they yet fell short of this. True love exerts itself beyond what seems possible, yet counts all it does as nothing.

St Bartholomew's last removal was into Great Armenia, where, preaching in a place obstinately addicted to the worship of idols, he was crowned with a glorious martyrdom, as St Gregory of Tours mentions.<sup>1</sup> The modern Greek historians say that he was condemned by the governor of Albanopolis to be crucified. Others affirm that he was flayed alive, which might well enough consist with his crucifixion; this double punishment being in use, as we learn from Plutarch and Arrian, not only in Egypt, but also among the Persians, the next neighbours to these Armenians, who might very easily borrow from them this piece of barbarous cruelty. Theodorus Lector says that the Emperor Anastasius, having built the city of Duras in Mesopotamia in 508, caused the relics of St Bartholomew to be removed thither. St Gregory of Tours assures us that, before the end of the sixth age, they were carried to the isle of Lipari, near Sicily. Anastasius the Librarian informs us<sup>2</sup> that in 809 they were translated from Lipari to Benevento; from whence they were conveyed to Rome in 983, as Baronius relates. Ever since that time they lie deposited in a porphyry monument under the high altar in the famous Church of St Bartholomew, in the isle of the Tiber, in Rome. An arm of this apostle's body was sent as a present by the Bishop of Benevento to St Edward the Confessor, and by him bestowed on the cathedral Church of Canterbury. Among the many excellent statues which adorn the cathedral at Milan, none is more justly admired than one of St Bartholomew flayed alive, representing the muscles, veins, and other parts with an inimitable softness and justness, the work of Chr. Cibo. The feast of St Bartholomew in ancient Martyrologies is marked on the 24th of August in the West, but among the Greeks on the 11th of June.

The characteristical virtue of the apostles was zeal for the divine glory: the first property of the love of God. A soldier is always ready to defend the honour of his prince, and a son that of his father; and can a Christian say he loves God who is indifferent to his honour? Or can charity towards his neighbour be lodged in his breast if he can see him in danger of perishing and not endeavour, at least by tears and prayers, to avert his misfortune? Every faithful servant of God makes the first petition which our Lord teaches us in his divine prayer the object of his perpetual ardent desires and tears, that the God of his heart, and of all creatures, may be known, perfectly loved, and faithfully served by all; and he never ceases earnestly to invite, with the royal prophet, all creatures with their whole strength and with all their powers to magnify the Lord with him: but then it is the first part of his care and prayer that he may himself

<sup>1</sup> Lib. i. c. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Auctar. Bibl. Patr.

perfectly attain to this happiness of devoting to God all the affections of his soul and all the actions of his life; and it is to him a subject of perpetual tears and compunction that he should have ever offended so good a God and so kind a Redeemer.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 24 :*

ST BARTHOLOMEW, Apostle : ST IRCHARD or ERTHAD, in Scotland, Bishop : THE HOLY MARTYRS OF UTICA, called THE WHITE MASS, because their ashes, taken from the furnace wherein they were burned, had cemented with the lime : ST OÜEN or AUÜOEN, Bishop, also called DADON, blessed, with his brother, by St Columban, in his infancy.

AUGUST 25

ST LEWIS, KING OF FRANCE

(A.D. 1270)

THIS great king was son of Lewis VIII, and was eight years old when the death of his grandfather, Philip II, surnamed Augustus, put his father, who was then in the thirty-sixth year of his age, in possession of the crown of France, in 1223. The saint was born at Poissy, in the diocese of Chartres, on the 25th of April 1215; and, because he had been there raised to the dignity of a Christian by the grace of baptism, he afterwards honoured this place above others, to show how much he esteemed this spiritual dignity above that of his temporal crown. He made this his favourite place, took singular pleasure in bestowing charities and doing other good actions there; and in his familiar letters and private transactions, several copies whereof are still extant, he signed himself Lewis of Poissy. His mother was Blanche, daughter to Alphonsus IX, or as some call him the VIII, King of Castile, the great conqueror, who in the battle of Muradel defeated Mahomet Emir, called the Green, with an army of above two hundred thousand Moors. She was a princess of extraordinary beauty and prudence, was endued with zeal for religion and other virtues, and had great talents for government. Some have charged her with ambition and craft; but others call these accusations mere slanders, raised by her enemies during her regency. To her care and attention in the education of St Lewis we are indebted, under God, for the great example of his virtues. From his birth she would never suffer him to suck any other breasts but her own, and gave all possible attention to every part of his education and that of her other children. By her care he was perfectly master of the Latin tongue, learned to speak in public, and to write with elegance, grace, and dignity, and was instructed in the art of war, the wisest maxims of government, and all the accomplishments of a king. He was a good historian and often read the works of the fathers. It was his mother's first care to instil into his tender soul the highest esteem and awe for everything that regarded the divine worship, the strongest sentiments of religion and virtue, and a particular love of

holy chastity. She used often to say to him when he was a child, "I love you, my dear son, with all the tenderness a mother is capable of; but I would infinitely rather see you fall down dead at my feet than that you should ever commit a mortal sin." The king frequently said to others that the strong impression which this important lesson made on his mind was never effaced during his whole life, and that no day passed in which it did not recur and excite him vigorously to arm himself afresh against all snares and dangers of surprise. He was placed very young on the throne.

Lewis VIII died on the 7th of November 1226. Blanche, the queen mother, was declared regent for her son, who was then only twelve years old. To prevent seditions, she hastened the ceremony of his coronation, which was performed at Rheims, on the first Sunday of Advent, by the Bishop of Soissons, the archbishopric of Rheims being then vacant. The young king did not look upon this action as a mere ceremony, but prepared himself by the most fervent exercises of devotion in order to move God to accompany the exterior unction which he then received with the invisible anointing of his grace, by which he might be made truly the anointed of the Lord. He considered the pomp of that day with fear and humility, saying to God in his heart with David, "To thee, O Lord, have I raised my soul; and in thee do I place my confidence." He trembled in taking the coronation oath, begging of God resolution, light, and strength, to employ his authority, according to his obligations, only for the divine honour, the defence of the church, and the good of his people. Several of the greatest lords of the kingdom, thinking to lay hold of the opportunity of the king's minority, entered into a confederacy together and made many extravagant demands. None of these princes would be present at the coronation, and they appeared in arms soon after it was over. The chief were Philip, Count of Boulogne, a natural son of Philip Augustus; Peter of Dreux, a prince of the royal blood who was also Count of Brittany, having married the daughter of Constantia, Countess of Brittany, after the death of Count Arthur, whom our King John is accused of having murdered; Hugh of Lusignan, Count of La Marche, who, after the death of King John, had married his widow, who had been Queen of England and was therefore called the countess queen: but the most powerful of all these lords was Theobald or Thibault, Count of Champagne, afterwards also King of Navarre. The queen regent put herself, with her son, at the head of his troops, and finding means to bring over the Count of Champagne to his duty, struck the rest with such consternation that they all retired. They were soon after again in arms, and would have seized the king's person near Orleans had not the Count of Champagne given the regent notice, and the whole country taken arms to escort him hastily to Paris. The whole time of the king's minority was disturbed by these rebels; but the

regent, by several alliances and negotiations, and chiefly by her courage and diligence, by which she always prevented them in the field, continually dissipated their cabals. By her generals she pushed on the war against the Albigenes; and, in the third year of her regency, obliged Raymund, Count of Toulouse and Duke of Narbonne, to receive her conditions; these were, that he should marry his daughter Jane to Alphonsus, the king's brother, who should inherit the county of Toulouse, and that in case they should have no children by this marriage, that whole inheritance should revert to the crown; which accordingly happened. Henry III, King of England, had not taken advantage of these disturbances in France to recover what his father had lost in Aquitain, which some attributed to his irresolution and to the counsels of his favourite, Robert of Burgh or Burk. In 1230 he sailed into Brittany to succour the count, who was pressed by the regent, but he undertook nothing; and being returned to London in 1231, he concluded a truce between the two crowns for three years, and Peter, Count of Brittany, threw himself at the feet of King Lewis with a rope about his neck and obtained his pardon, engaging to serve five years in Palestine at his own expense. Lewis rejoiced in his victories only because he saw he had procured by them the advantages of peace to his subjects. He was merciful even to rebels; and, by his readiness to receive any proposals of agreement, gave the most evident proofs that he neither sought revenge nor conquests by his arms. Never had any man a greater love for the church or a greater veneration for its ministers than this good king, yet this was not blind; and he opposed the injustices of bishops when he saw them betrayed into any, and he listened not to their complaints till he had given a full hearing to the other party, as he showed in the violent contests of the Bishops of Beauvais and Metz with the corporations of those cities.

Pope Gregory IX (who had succeeded Honorius III), in the broils which the Emperor Frederic II had raised about the investitures of bishops, wrote to St Lewis that he had deprived Frederic of the empire, and had proposed Robert, the king's brother, in his place. But the king showed no other regard to those letters than to interest himself in procuring a reconciliation of the emperor to the holy see. Gregory IX died in 1241, and Celestine IV, who succeeded him, filled the pontifical throne only eighteen days. After him Cardinal Fieschi, a Genoese, was elected under the name of Innocent IV, in whose time these struggles were the most dangerous, and with which St Lewis never interfered but to sue for peace.

This good king never thought himself so happy as when he enjoyed the conversation of some priests or religious men of eminent sanctity; and he often invited such to his royal table. He appeared at the foot of the altars more humble and recollected than the most devout hermit, and he allotted several hours in the day to prayer. When some people said of

him that he spent too much time in his usual devotions, he only answered that if he employed that time in hunting, tournaments, gaming, or plays they would not take so exact an account of the time which he lost at them. He hardly allowed himself any time for diversion, and so great was his temperance and mortification that he had the art of practising it with great austerity amidst the dainties of a royal table. Yet how much Christian severity soever he exercised upon himself, his virtue never made him morose. He was extremely humane and very agreeable in conversation. The inward peace of his mind, and the joy with which his pure soul overflowed from the presence of the Holy Ghost, enhanced the natural liveliness and cheerfulness of his temper. Coming from his closet or from the church, he in a moment appeared conversing upon business: or at the head of an army, with the countenance of a hero fighting battles, enduring the greatest fatigues and daring the most alarming dangers. He knew how to observe seasons, but with a decent liberty. Once when a certain friar had started a grave religious subject at table, he agreeably turned the discourse to another subject, saying, "All things have their time." His discourse at such times was cheerful without levity or impertinence, and instructive without stiffness or austerity. He celebrated feasts and rejoicings on the creation of knights and other such public occasions with great magnificence, some of which Joinville has given us a description of; but he banished from his court all diversions which are dangerous to morals. As for himself, he gave the greatest part of his time to the business of the state, and his devotion never in the least took off his care of the government. He was exact in holding councils, often gave both public and private audiences, and sometimes to people of the lowest rank; and was indefatigable in applying himself to the regulation of his army and kingdom. He was naturally bountiful. Nothing was more edifying than his sweetness, his moderation in dress and equipage, and the Christian humility in which he exercised himself more than in any other virtue, and which he practised more particularly towards the poor, often serving them at table, washing their feet, and visiting them in the hospitals.

Modesty, the most amiable of virtues, was not the least part of our saint's character. It was such in him that its awful sovereignty, which appeared in his very blushes, sufficed to check all loose thoughts in others. He was a lover of music and singing; but if anyone, in a song or otherwise, let slip the least indecent word before him, he was for ever banished his presence. When it was expedient for the king to marry, the most virtuous lady was his choice. This was Margaret, the eldest daughter of Raymund Berenger, Count of Provence, of which sovereignty his ancestors had received the investiture from the emperors of Germany. They were descended from the counts of Barcelona, who were a younger family of the royal house of Arragon. This count's second daughter, Eleanor, was

married to Henry III, King of England; his third, Sancia, to his brother Richard, afterwards King of the Romans; and Beatrice, the fourth and youngest, to Charles, brother to St Lewis, to whom she brought for her dower the county of Provence. Margaret, the eldest, surpassed the rest in beauty, wit, and her extraordinary piety and virtue. St Lewis met her at Sens, where the marriage was celebrated on the 27th of May 1234. God blessed it with a constant happy union of hearts, and an offspring which has given kings to France ever since. They imitated young Toby in their preparation for this state, and always observed continency in Lent, all other fast-days, all festivals, and in other seasons prescribed by the ancient canons, which St Charles Borromeo and the Roman catechism order to be recommended, though by disuse they are not now esteemed as precepts, but counsels. King Lewis being before inured to government, took the reins into his own hands in April 1236, having completed the twenty-first year of his age; but he continued to show the greatest deference to his mother, and still to govern by her counsels, which were always wise and virtuous. He had every day regular hours for reciting the divine office, and for his other devotions, in which he was constant and exact. He wore a hair-cloth, often used disciplines, and went to confession two or three times a week. The first monument of piety which he erected was the abbey of Royaumont. His father had ordered in his will that the price of his jewels should be laid out in founding a monastery. St Lewis very much increased that sum and made the foundation truly royal and magnificent. Out of devotion he sometimes worked with his own hands in building the church. This was afterwards one of those places to which he frequently retired to breathe the air of holy solitude and to attend to God with more perfect recollection of soul. He founded the Chartreuse at Paris, to which he gave the palace of Vauvert; and he built many other religious places and hospitals.

Baldwin II, the Latin Emperor of Constantinople in 1239, made St Lewis (in gratitude for his great largesses to the Christians in Palestine and other parts of the East) a present of the holy crown of thorns, which was formerly kept in the imperial palace, but was then put in the hands of the Venetians as a pledge for a considerable loan of money borrowed of them, which the saint discharged. He sent two Dominican friars to bring this sacred treasure into France, and met it himself five leagues beyond Sens, attended with his whole court and a numerous clergy. He and his brother Robert, walking barefoot, carried it into that city, and after the same manner into Paris in a most pompous and devout procession, all the streets being magnificently adorned. The king deposited it in the old chapel of St Nicholas, in his own palace in Paris, but gave some thorns of it to the Church of Toledo, to that of the Franciscans at Seez, and to the abbey of St Eloi, near Arras. The abbey of St Denis was possessed

of some before this time, as Rigord, the physician and historian of Philip Augustus, testifies in his reign. In 1241, St Lewis received from Constantinople, with other precious relics, a very large piece of the true cross, probably the same which St Helen brought thither from Jerusalem. The year following he pulled down the chapel of St Nicholas, in his palace, and built on the same spot that which is now called, from these relics, the Holy Chapel.<sup>1</sup> It is justly admired for the elegance, correctness, and sumptuous finishings of the architecture, and cost in building forty thousand livres, which, according to the most probable estimation, would amount at this time to the sum of eight hundred thousand livres, says F. Fontenai,<sup>2</sup> that is, about forty thousand pounds sterling.

Several ordinances of this good prince, still extant, are so many monuments which show us how much he applied himself to see justice well administered. It is his eulogium, in this respect, that in succeeding reigns, whenever complaints were raised among the people, the cry of those that were dissatisfied was only to demand that abuses should be reformed and justice impartially administered, as was done in the reign of St Lewis. In 1230 he, by severe laws, forbade all manner of usury, and restrained the Jews in particular from practising it by many rigorous clauses. He afterwards compelled them to restore what they had exacted by that iniquitous oppression; and where the creditors could not be found, to give such gains towards the holy war, which Gregory IX was endeavouring to set on foot. He published an ordinance commanding all who should be guilty of blasphemy to be marked upon the lips, some say upon the forehead, with a red-hot iron; and he caused this to be executed on a rich citizen of Paris, a person of great consideration; and to some of his courtiers who murmured at this severity, he said that he would rather undergo that punishment himself than omit anything that might put a stop to so horrible a crime, as William de Nangis tells us. Some moderns say he ordered the tongues of blasphemers to be bored through; but this is not mentioned by contemporary writers. This king set himself to protect vassals from the oppression of the lords, and took such effectual methods that they were delivered from the hardest part of their servitude. When Engueran de Coucy, one of the greatest lords in Flanders, had hanged three children for hunting rabbits in his woods, the king caused him to be imprisoned in the castle of the Louvre, and to be tried, not by his peers as he demanded, but, as a flaw was found in his peerage, by the ordinary judges, who condemned him to death. He afterwards spared his life at the earnest suit of the peers of his realm, but subjected him to an amercement which deprived him of the greater part of his estates. This money the king ordered to be employed partly in building and endowing two chapels in which mass should be said for ever for the souls of the three children;

<sup>1</sup> Du Bois, *Hist. Ecclés. Paris*, lib. xv. c. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. de l'Eglise Gallicane*, t. xi. lib. 31.



partly in founding several hospitals and two monasteries of Franciscans and Dominicans in Paris.

During the minority of this good prince the kingdom was entangled in many domestic broils, and distracted with intestine seditions and wars in every part, insomuch that it seems a miracle of providence that the queen, with all her prudence and diligence, should have been able to preserve the state entire, or that the king should be able afterwards to compose and settle it in the manner he did, reigning for some years with his sword always in his hand, yet almost without bloodshed. Frederic II, the impious and faithless Emperor of Germany, though he often broke his engagements with St Lewis as well as with other powers, could never provoke him to war; so dextrous was the saint in maintaining both his honour and his interests without it. Indeed, being exempt from those passions which usually blow the coals, he had an uncommon advantage in the pursuit of justice and necessary defence; and, whilst his magnanimity and foresight kept him always in readiness, his love of peace inclined him rather to sacrifice petty considerations than to see one drop of Christian blood spilt, if possible.

He was extremely careful, in his engagements with other princes, never to be drawn into their quarrels, though he used all possible good offices to reconcile their differences. In his wars to reduce rebels he caused the damages which innocent persons had received even by his enemy's forces to be diligently inquired into, and full restitution to be made for them. The Count of La Marche and Xaintogne, whose estates were a fief of Poitou, refused to pay homage to the Count of Poitiers, the brother of St Lewis, through the instigation of his wife Isabel, the widow of the late King John and mother of Henry III, then King of England, whom she called over to support his independency. The King of France marched against the Count of La Marche and took Fontenai, in which he made the governor, who was the Count of La Marche's son, prisoner with forty knights. Some advised the king to hang them as rebels, or at least the governor; but this counsel he rejected with horror, saying the son had been obliged to obey his father. He defeated King Henry III (who was never born to be a soldier) at Taillebourg upon the Charente, and the city of Saintes opened its gates to him in 1242. He again vanquished the Count of La Marche, who thereupon made his submission. Henry III fled to Bourdeaux and the next year returned to England, having made a truce with the French, for which he obliged himself to pay them five thousand pounds sterling in five years. The counsellors of St Lewis called it bad policy that he neglected that opportunity of conquering Guienne and driving the English out of all France. But his views were very opposite, as appeared after his first Crusade, when he concluded a peace with the English in 1258. On this occasion he yielded to England, Limousin, Quercy, and Perigord, and the reversion of Agenois and Xaintogne; King Henry III renouncing, on

his side, all pretensions to Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Poitou. The French called the delicacy of their king's conscience a scrupulosity which was contrary to good policy. But to satisfy them, he answered he did not doubt but King John had justly forfeited those dominions for refusing to clear himself of the charge brought against him for the murder of his nephew Arthur, Count of Brittany; but that he hoped by this cession to cement a lasting peace between the two nations, and that it was very honourable to his crown to have so great a king for vassal.

At this time the barbarians raised great commotions in the East. A band of desperate Saracen ruffians in the mountains of Phœnicia obeyed one whose dignity was elective, and who was called the Ancient of the Mountain, or Prince of the Assassins. He had men among his banditti always ready to execute his orders in any part of the world, and to poison or stab whomsoever he should point out to them as obstructing the propagation of the Mahometan superstition. Hearing much of the power and zeal of St Lewis before he had taken the cross, he sent two resolute soldiers disguised into France, with an order to assassinate the king. St Lewis, by the special providence of God, was advertised of this hellish design, and the assassins being apprehended he courteously sent them home to their master. This visible protection of heaven was a new motive to make him redouble his piety and fervour. The great conqueror in Great and Little Tartary and the Indies, named Gingis Chan or king of kings, after he had vanquished the famous Tartar prince called Ung Chan, who is thought to have been the Nestorian king who was surnamed Prester-jan and was in priest's orders, formed an extravagant design of subduing the whole world to his empire. Some of his successors pursued the same; and in this view Octaï, one of them, sent out three numberless swarms of Tartar forces, which spread desolation through Hungary, Poland, and Bohemia, and filled all Europe with dread and consternation. Queen Blanche and the whole French nation trembled; the king alone was undaunted and said cheerfully to his mother, expressing the true motive of his confidence, "Madam, what have we to fear? If these barbarians come to us, we shall either be conquerors or shall die martyrs." By the resolution with which he spoke this, he calmed the alarms of his mother and of the whole state. Whilst he was preparing for his first crusade, he received a haughty letter from this Octaï, who styled himself the Immortal, pretended that his Tartars were the sons of men to whom the whole earth was promised, and required that he should deliver up his kingdom into his hands and receive laws from him. But of this insolence the good king took no notice. Our saint afterwards sent persons into Great Tartary to inform him of the true situation of religion in those vast countries, and hearing that a daughter of Prester-jan was a zealous Christian, with some others, he entreated the pope to confer episcopal orders on certain Dominican and

Franciscan friars, and to send them with proper faculties into these parts; for which mission he furnished the expenses. But the progress of the arms of the Mahometans in the Holy Land was what chiefly drew the attention of this zealous king. An extraordinary accident gave occasion to his undertaking in person a holy war for the relief of the Christians in those parts.

In the year 1244 St Lewis was seized at Pontoise with a violent dysentery and fever, which soon seemed to have brought him to the very brink of the grave. The grief and consternation into which this accident cast the whole kingdom, and the ardour with which all persons solicited heaven by their vows, tears, and almsdeeds for the life of their good king, are not to be expressed. The distemper still increasing, he fell into convulsions, and afterwards into a coma and a kind of trance, in which he lay some days in such a condition that he was judged already dead; and his face would have been covered had not a lady prevented it, affirming she perceived him still to breathe a little. Then the piece of the true cross and other relics that had been sent him by the Emperor Baldwin were brought to his bedside and applied to his body. Soon after this he recovered from his insensibility, began to move his arms and legs, and spoke with some difficulty. By his first words he expressed his resolution to take the cross as the badge of enrolling himself to serve in the holy war, and calling for William, the Bishop of Paris, who was present, he desired him to receive his vow for that expedition and to put the badge of the cross on his shoulder. At this the two queens, his mother and wife, fell at his feet weeping, and the Bishops of Paris and Meaux, by his bedside with others, conjured him that he would not entertain such a thought. But he was not by any means to be satisfied, and gave great signs of joy in receiving the cross which the Bishop of Paris gave him with tears. The king continued still in a lingering state of health for some time, but in the beginning of the following year grew stronger than he had been before his illness. He then renewed his vow and, by letters, assured the Christians in Palestine that he would make all possible haste to their assistance. But the preparation for such an expedition and the settling of his kingdom obliged him to defer his departure for two years and a half.

At that time the king suffered a great loss by the death of William, the most learned, wise, and pious Bishop of Paris, who governed that see from 1228 to 1245. In his writings, in a plain, intelligible style, he keeps close to what concerns morality, discipline, and piety, and does not run out upon metaphysical notions like many divines of his time.

In 1245 Pope Innocent IV retired from Italy to Lyons, in France, which was at that time a free city, subject to its own archbishop, though held in fief of the emperor. This city seemed to him the most secure place, it being most remote from the arms of the emperor, Frederic II, from whom he had already suffered much and had everything to fear.

Here he assembled that year the first general council of Lyons, in which he summoned Frederic to appear; and, upon his refusal, accused him of often having broken his word and his oath; of having arrested and imprisoned several bishops who were going to Rome to a council called by Gregory IX; of having obstructed the regular elections of pastors, robbed the churches, invaded their possessions and those of the holy see; of having made a league with the Saracens, and made use of them in his armies against Christians. For these irregularities, and because he refused to make satisfaction, the pope pronounced against him a sentence of excommunication and deposition. St Lewis, to whom strong application was made both by the emperor and pope, endeavoured to reconcile them; and as he, with many others, disapproved of the step which the latter had taken, so he very much condemned Frederic's injustice and passionate behaviour.<sup>1</sup> He was better pleased with the measures taken by the pope in this council for the holy war, to which his holiness allotted the twentieth part of all the revenues of benefices for three years, and the tenth of the revenues of the apostolic see and of the cardinals. Three of the king's brothers took the cross to accompany him: Alphonsus, Count of Poitiers, Robert, Count of Artois, and Charles, Count of Anjou and Provence; as did also Peter, Count of Brittany, Hugh, Duke of Burgundy, William of Dampierre, Count of Flanders, Hugh of Lusignan, Count of La Marche, the Counts of Dreux, Bar, Soissons, Retel, Vendôme, Montfort, and a great number of other lords. The king declared his mother Blanche regent of the kingdom, but the queen consort would absolutely bear him company. The king went to the abbey of St Denis to take the Oriflame, and set sail from Aiguesmortes with his fleet on the 27th of August 1248, towards Cyprus, where he had caused large magazines to be laid up. He arrived there in three weeks, and held a great council concerning the operations of the expedition. The Christians had still in Palestine and Syria four principalities, namely, that of Acre or Ptolemais, that of Tripoli, that of Tyre, and that of Antioch. Saladin had dismantled the city of Jerusalem, from which time it had fallen again sometimes into the hands of the Christians whenever they happened to be stronger in the field. At that time the Corasmins, the most fierce and warlike of all the Mahometan nations, were masters of it. They had been driven out of their own country, probably that of Coarsem, by an incursion of Tartars; and Saleh, Sultan of Egypt, taking twenty thousand of them into his pay, promised them the plunder and lands they could win of the Christians in Palestine. In Egypt Eladel had been succeeded by Elchanul, and he by Melech-Saleh, in whose reign St Lewis arrived in Cyprus. The holy king passed the winter in that island, being honourably received by King Henry of Lusignan. He determined to attack the Sultan of Egypt, who at that time threatened

<sup>1</sup> F. Daniel in St Lewis, p. 482.

to swallow up all Palestine; he therefore sent him from Cyprus a declaration of war unless he consented to restore the lands he had unjustly seized in Palestine. Saleh, who was sick with a sore in one of his legs which threatened a mortification, wept as he read this letter, but sent back a haughty answer, and made all preparations possible for war. He employed spies to poison the victualling-houses of the Christian army; but they were discovered and confessed the fact. William, the valiant Earl of Salisbury, surnamed Longsword, brought to St Lewis in Cyprus two hundred gallant English knights. The Lord of Joinville, his historian, joined him there with a fresh reinforcement from France. The king's fleet consisted of one hundred and twenty great vessels, and one thousand six hundred and fifty small ones, carrying on board twelve thousand eight hundred French, English, and Cypriot knights, and above sixty thousand chosen soldiers.

After having waited eight months in Cyprus, the fleet put to sea on Trinity Sunday, and though a violent storm had dispersed several of the ships, they arrived in four days before Damiata, a strong fortress of Egypt, situated on an island formed by two of the mouths of the Nile, and built upon the eastern channel on the shore opposite to the ruins of the ancient Pelusium. The sultan had filled the Nile with his fleet and lined the shore with a numerous army, appearing himself at their head. At this sight of the Saracens St Lewis cried out, "Who am I but a wretched man, whose life belongs to God! He hath a sovereign right to dispose of it as it pleaseth him. Whether we are conquerors or martyrs, we shall glorify him either by the prosperity of our arms or by the sacrifice of our lives." The fear of a storm rising in a place where they had no port to shelter them determined the king to make a descent the next morning, which was Friday, though the vessels which had been dispersed were not yet come up. The next day the sultan, finding his sickness much increased, had ordered himself to be carried to a house of pleasure, a league above Damiata. The vessels in the centre, in which was Joinville, were carried the swiftest, and the men landed safe; then they covered themselves with their bucklers and presented the point of their lances, which were in that age very long. The Saracen horse came upon the gallop towards them, but durst not attempt to break the kind of rampart which their lances formed. The left wing, commanded by the Count of Jaffe, and the right, in which the king was, being all prosperously got on shore and in good order, the whole army marched towards the Saracens, who made a stand; but having lost the Governor of Damiata and two emirs, took to their heels, and their fleet sailed up the Nile. The inhabitants and garrison of Damiata were in the utmost consternation upon a report that the sultan was dead and, setting fire to the place, fled. The French immediately took possession of that strong city and put out the fire. The king, full of pious and religious sentiments, made his entry, not with the pomp of a conqueror,

but with the humility of a truly Christian prince, walking barefoot with the queen, the princes his brothers, the King of Cyprus, and other great lords, preceded by the legate, the patriarch of Jerusalem, the bishops, and all the clergy of the camp. Returning humble thanks to God, they went in this manner to the principal mosque, which the legate purified and consecrated with the usual ceremonies of the church, dedicating it under the name of the Mother of God. The sultan, though half dead, in his rage commanded fifty-four captains of the garrison to be hanged upon the spot; then was carried up the eastern channel of the Nile to Massour, or Mazour, a city which his father had built in the midway betwixt Damiata and Grand Cairo; and was followed by his army. The Nile begins to rise in May from the rains which fall in the torrid zone on the north side of the equator, as the sun, which raises thick clouds under it, departs from that point of the zodiac; from the same cause the flood of this river continues from June to the middle of September. This and the excessive heats obliged the Christian army to stay till the end of summer at Damiata. The king, to prevent as much as possible all plunders and injustices, took all care possible that such crimes should be strictly inquired into and punished, and that ample restitution should be made for any such that should happen to be committed. Not content to have given this severe charge to the officers, he appointed certain religious men in whom he could confide to watch over the officers and to receive all complaints. He forbade any infidel to be slain whom it was possible to make prisoner; and he took great care that all who desired to embrace the faith (as many did, moved by the pious example of this great king) should be perfectly instructed and baptized. But, notwithstanding all his watchfulness, whilst the army stayed about Damiata, many, to his extreme grief, gave themselves up to debauchery and outrageous acts of violence.

In November the king, leaving the queen and other princesses at Damiata with a strong garrison, set out with his army, intending to march to Grand Cairo, the capital. When he came to the place which separates the two arms of the Nile near Massour, he stopped, the Mahometan camp being on the other side of the river. In the meantime the sultan died on the 26th of November 1249, leaving his son Almoaden very young; but he had appointed Facardin; who was the general of his army, and passed for the wisest and most valiant man in Egypt, regent of the kingdom, and his conduct justified the choice which his master had made of him. He constantly kept the Christians at bay, and often cut off their convoys at Damiata and harassed all that stirred from their camp; in which he employed the Bedwins or Bedouins, a tribe of Arabs accustomed to live by plunder. The French were extremely perplexed how to pass this arm of the Nile called Thanis in sight of the enemy. To do it in boats, or to throw any kind of bridges over, they found equally impossible unless they

could first clear the opposite shore. They endeavoured to fill up part of the channel by a new bank, but the Saracens widened it on the other side. They built several wooden towers to cover their workmen; but the Saracens destroyed them by throwing great stones upon them from sixteen large machines, or burnt them by throwing *gregeois* or Greek fire, which was a kind of wildfire made principally of naphtha, a bituminous liquid substance easily inflammable and not to be extinguished. The Greeks are sometimes mentioned to have used this wildfire in war, and its effects were dreadful. The Saracens had learned it from the Greeks, and St Lewis never heard the horrible noise of it flying in the air but, falling on the ground, he besought God to have pity on those who fought for the glory of his holy name. Things stood thus for near three months, when a Bedwin came to one of the French commanders and offered for five hundred besants of gold to show them a ford which might be passed on horseback. The price, though excessive, was readily paid him, and the ford was found, though a dangerous one, and false in one place where the horses were forced to swim. In the frequent skirmishes which had been fought the French had always been victorious, and in them the Counts of Anjou and Poitiers had gained a great deal of reputation. On this occasion the Count of Artois, by repeated instances, obtained leave of the king to pass the ford at the head of the vanguard. The king, fearing his warmth would draw him into some rash attempt, was unwilling, and only consented upon his solemn promise not to do anything without his order. The army crossed the river on Shrove Tuesday in 1250; the vanguard easily repulsed a body of infidels which disputed the passage, and the whole army got safe over, formed itself on the other side and attacked the camp of the infidels, who were routed, and Facardin himself, fighting like a desperado, was run through the body with a lance and killed. But the rashness of Robert, Count of Artois, overturned all these glorious advantages. Having driven before him a body of Saracens, he too eagerly pursued them with two thousand men that were under his command, among whom were the Earl of Salisbury and the English knights. They entered Massour intermixed with the fugitives, and became at once masters of the town. This success might in some degree have atoned for the count's rashness had he stopped here, as the Earl of Salisbury and others earnestly besought him; but he laughed at their prudence and pursued the enemy a great way beyond the town, till they grew too numerous and strong for him. They then drove him back into Massour and besieged him in their turn in a house. He defended himself with incredible valour till, exhausted with fatigue and wounds, he fell upon a heap of infidels whom he had slain with his own hands. The great Earl of Salisbury and the two hundred brave English knights were also cut off, and their loss was extremely regretted by St Lewis, though he said we ought to envy the glory and happiness of a death which he called equal to martyrdom. Being asked

about the Count of Artois he said, some tears beginning to run from his eyes, "He is in paradise; we ought to praise God for everything, and adore his profound judgments." The king had in the battle performed prodigies of valour and conduct.

The Christian army, after having been twice victorious, was worsted in an engagement with Bondocdar, chiefly by his wildfire, which took hold of their clothes and the caparisons of the horses and strangely disconcerted the soldiers, who had never seen it used in battles. After this combat the Christians were almost all seized with a violent scurvy, which ate away their gums and jaws with incredible pain and subjected them to terrible operations of surgeons; a grievous dysentery at length came on and a bleeding of the nose was the symptom of approaching death. Great numbers died, and the king himself was sick and his body reduced to a mere skeleton; yet he obliged his army to keep Lent. He led it over the ford to his old camp, repulsed the Saracens as often as they attacked him, and marched towards Damiata till he arrived at a little town called by Joinville Cassel, by others Charmasach. Here the Christians, whilst they were treating with the sultan, who still offered them advantageous conditions, by a mistake of some of their leaders, threw down their arms and surrendered themselves prisoners. The infidels massacred all the poorer sort that were sick or wounded; but, by a certain drink, cured in a couple of days the prisoners that were persons of rank, though they were in the last stage of their fatal distemper; for only the Egyptians knew the remedy, which seems to have consisted in a decoction of certain herbs. Thus Joinville the historian and the king himself recovered their health by means of their captivity. The queen at Damiata, upon receiving this melancholy news, was brought to bed of her third son, who was named John, and from the sorrowful time of his birth was surnamed Tristan. The prisoners were conducted to Massour, and the king was treated with respect. His conduct, resolution, and behaviour filled the Mahometans with admiration and astonishment. Under his sickness and misfortunes he never let fall one impatient or angry word.

As soon as he was taken he desired to be attended by his two chaplains, with whom he recited the breviary every day with as much sedateness as if he had been in perfect health in his palace. He had the prayers of the mass read to him every day (except the words of consecration), that he might the better join in spirit and desire with the church in her daily sacrifice. In the midst of the insults that were sometimes offered him by those that guarded him, he preserved a certain air of majesty and authority which kept them in awe. When he was threatened with the most ignominious treatment and with the torture of the bernicles (a wooden engine by which every limb of the body was pressed and bruised, and the bones broken), he beheld the terrible machine without so much as changing



colour, and answered coolly that they were masters of his body and might do with it what they pleased; the sultan sent to him a proposal by which he demanded a million of besants of gold and the city of Damiata for his ransom and that of the other prisoners. He answered that a King of France ought not to redeem himself for money, but that he would give the city for his own releasement, and the million of besants for that of all the other prisoners. The sultan, charmed with his generosity and sincerity, said he had a noble soul, and sent him word that out of the esteem he had for him he freely gave him his liberty and remitted a fifth part of the sum demanded for the others. A truce was concluded for ten years, in which the Christians of Palestine were comprehended.

After this the king and the principal lords of the army were put on board four vessels to go down the river towards Damiata, and to have an interview with the sultan in the way. But all this was overturned by the murder of the Sultan Moadan. He had treated some emirs of the Mammelus with severity and threatened to displace others among them when they should arrive at Damiata, and he was determined to set aside his mother-in-law Sajareldor. Hereupon a conspiracy was laid to take away his life in a public assembly of the emirs. Bondocdar first struck him on the hand with his sword. At this signal other emirs rushed towards him, whilst the whole army stood looking idly on. Moadan fled to a neighbouring tower; but it was set on fire. He then ran from one of his emirs to another, falling on his knees to entreat each of them; but everyone pushed him violently from him. He therefore cried out, "What, Mussulmans! is there not one man out of a hundred thousand that will defend me? I beg only my life. Let who will reign in Egypt." Several arrows were let fly at him, and he threw himself into the Nile, hoping to escape by swimming; but was stabbed in the water by nine Mammelus. Octaï, one of the principal emirs and murderers of the sultan, ran from this barbarous action to the tent in which King Lewis was, and showing him his dagger all bloody, told him he was now master of his person and would kill him unless he created him a knight, as the Emperor Frederic had made Facardin. But the good king remembered how much that action had been condemned, and refused to do it, looking upon it that seeing an unbeliever is incapable of discharging the duties of the Christian knighthood, that honour could not be conferred on such a one. The barbarian was exceedingly moved by the king's modest courage, and his fury was converted into admiration. Some of the emirs even suggested that he would be the most worthy person to be raised to the dignity of sultan had he not been an enemy to their religion. They therefore set the crown on the head of the widow Sajareodor and appointed a Mammelu, surnamed the Turcoman, to be her general and prime-minister. The former treaty with the king was confirmed with a few alterations on the 4th of May. The infidels ratified

it by various strong forms of oaths. Among those which they proposed to the king this was one, that he would be regarded to have denied God, his baptism, and the divine law, and to have spit and trampled upon the cross, if he should ever violate the treaty. The good king was shocked at the recital of such an imprecation, and would by no means consent to repeat it, saying that it implied a blasphemy. The barbarians hereupon threatened to cut off his head, or to crucify him with all his people, and held the points of their swords to his throat; yet he was inflexible, and they at length contented themselves with his oath in the usual form. The king was detained prisoner thirty-two days. At last, after having been perplexed with many cavils, treacheries, and alarms from the emirs, after having paid them a quarter of the ransom, and given his brother, the Earl of Poitiers, as a hostage till the payment of the rest (which was made in a few days), having, moreover, surrendered Damiata which he had held eleven months, he was set at liberty. He embarked at Damiata with his two brothers (who were released upon the payment of the ransom) and the Counts of Flanders and Brittany, the Lord of Joinville, and the Marshal of France. The perfidious infidels, contrary to their treaty, confirmed by oath, murdered all the sick and wounded among the Christians in Damiata, and in many other things violated the articles of the agreement. Yet the king, when it was in his power, used no reprisals, and was most scrupulously faithful in fulfilling every point on his side, as he was in all his other treaties.

Out of a desire of comforting the Christians in Palestine, and of visiting the holy places, he sailed thither with the remains of his army and in six days landed at Acre. In this voyage, hearing that his brother Charles was playing at tables upon deck, he went to him and threw the dice overboard into the sea. The tears and entreaties of the Christians in those parts, who saw themselves lost without resource if forsaken by the king in their present distress, moved him to stay some time among them. But he sent back his brothers, Alphonsus and Charles, into France to comfort his mother, and most of the French nobility went with them. In Palestine the saint acted the part of a zealous missionary, strengthening many in their faith, and inspiring them with courage and resolution to suffer torments and death rather than to offend God. He often told them that as they lived on the ground on which Christ had so long conversed with men and had wrought all the wonderful mysteries of our redemption, their lives ought in a particular manner to be as much as possible the living copies of his holy conversation and spirit. The very sight of his devotion and piety was a moving sermon; forty Saracens at Acre were by it converted to the faith all at once, and others in other places, and among these several emirs. He visited Nazareth fasting and on foot. Not only France but all Europe had expressed the greatest affliction upon the news of his captivity.

The king being in Palestine wrote a circular letter to all his subjects in France, full of excellent maxims of zeal, piety, patience, and Christian prudence. He speaks of the death of the Count of Artois with the tenderness of a most affectionate brother; but expresses a holy joy that he was gone to take possession of the eternal recompense of martyrs. He discovers an entire but humble confidence in the divine mercy, and in the intercession of the martyrs; gives due praise to the actions of others; is himself the only person of whom he says nothing. Not the least tittle savours of vain-glory.

Moadan, the murdered Sultan of Egypt, was the last of the race of Saladin who reigned in that country. Saphradin the Younger, surnamed Nazer, the Sultan of Syria, was his cousin, and to revenge his death declared war against the Mammelus in Egypt; and in the beginning of the year 1251 sent an embassy to St Lewis, offering to make him master of the whole kingdom of Jerusalem if he would join him against the Egyptians. St Lewis answered that he should be willing to treat with him if the emirs in Egypt continued to break the treaty which he had made with them. He sent John of Valence into Egypt, who spoke boldly to the emirs of the Mammelus concerning their infractions of the treaty. The emirs promised to make amends, and to give the king the most favourable conditions he could desire if he would not make a league with the Sultan of Syria; and they released upon the spot two hundred knights and other Christian prisoners whom they had detained. St Lewis took this opportunity to rebuild the walls of Cæsarea, to fortify the port of Jaffa or Joppe, and to put other places of defence in the best condition he was able. In the meantime Queen Blanche being struck with a palsy, in the sixtieth year of her age, put on the Cistercian habit, and made her religious vows, having sent for the abbess of Maubuisson to receive them. From that time she would only be laid on a bed of straw, and would suffer no rich ornaments in her chamber; she expired, lying on ashes, upon the 1st day of December in 1252. The king when he received this melancholy news burst into floods of tears, and throwing himself on his knees at the foot of the altar in his chapel, addressed himself to God in these words: "Lord, I thank thee for having preserved to me so long the best of mothers. I confess there was nothing among creatures on earth that I loved with equal affection and tenderness. Thou takest her from me; and it is thy absolute will; may thy holy name for ever be blessed for it." He showed his filial regard for her by having the sacrifice of the mass offered for her soul in his presence every day of his life afterwards.<sup>1</sup> He appointed his two brothers in France regents of the kingdom till he could arrive, and began to prepare for his departure; but was obliged to stay a year longer to finish the fortifications which he had begun. He visited Tyre, Sidon, and other places, and put them in

<sup>1</sup> Gul. de Nangis, et Gaufridus de Bello-loco.

a posture of defence; with his small army he put to flight the Mahometans of Syria, and took from them in a wonderful manner the strong city of Naplosa, the ancient Samaria. Nothing could be more tender than the last adieus of the Christians of those parts, who with abundance of tears testified their sincere gratitude and called him their father. He embarked at Acre with the queen, his little children, officers, and troops, in fourteen vessels on the 24th of April 1254.

St Lewis made each vessel of his fleet, especially his own ship, a kind of church. He obtained leave from the legate that the blessed eucharist should be carried in his vessel on a rich altar for the sick.

Joinville relates that in their voyage at sea the king went to land at Lampedusa, a small uninhabited island lying betwixt Malta and Africa, and was strongly affected at the sight of a beautiful grove and garden with a cave or hermitage marked with crosses. They found there the bones of two hermits who had lately lived there. One of the company chose to stay behind, and succeeded the hermits in their anchoretical life. In this same voyage, a gentleman falling overboard invoked the intercession of the Mother of God, and was preserved floating upon the waves, though he was not able to swim, till the king's ship, which was half a league behind, came up, and the company finding him in that posture took him in. Joinville, who was an eyewitness with all others on board the king's vessel, afterwards had this miracle painted in his chapel and in the windows of his church at Blecour. The holy king seemed to be little affected with the universal joy which the people expressed for his return. He had always before his eyes the dangerous condition of the Christians in the East, and he wore the cross upon his clothes to show that he had not quitted his design of returning to their assistance; but his affliction, and the care which he took more than ever to sanctify himself by austerities and other good works, did not at all take off the application he owed to the good of his realm. He in the manner related above secured its tranquillity by a firm peace with England and Spain, with both which there was always danger of a sudden rupture.

In 1254 Henry III, King of England, visited the shrine of St Edmund of Canterbury at Pontigni, and coming to Paris passed there eight days with St Lewis. Interviews of kings usually produce quarrels which spring from jealousy, pride, and other passions; but here nothing reigned but harmony and piety. St Lewis told Henry that he esteemed himself infinitely more happy that God had given him patience in suffering than if he had conquered the world. Some time after this, King Henry and his barons in England, having exhausted the realm by an obstinate civil war, agreed on both sides to make St Lewis their judge, and signed a compromise by which they engaged themselves to submit to his decision; so great was the universal opinion of his wisdom, equity, and uprightness. The King and Queen of England, Prince Edmund, and many bishops and lords of

their party, and a great number of the confederate barons on the other side, came to Amiens. St Lewis repaired thither also; and after both parties had pleaded a long time he, by a definitive absolute sentence, annulled all the articles granted by the king to the barons in the parliament or assembly at Oxford,<sup>1</sup> as being extorted by compulsion, and as innovations injurious to the royal majesty; but he confirmed to the barons their ancient privileges.

St Lewis had no share in the transactions of his brother in Naples and Sicily, making it a rule never to interfere in the concerns of others, unless in works of religion or charity; but he never lost sight of the distressed Christians in the East, and the news of their calamities always made deep wounds in his heart.

In 1262 Haalon, a Mahometan Tartar commander in Syria, slew the last descendant of Saladin's brother, extinguished that Turkish branch, and made himself Sultan of Damascus. In Egypt, Bondocdar, general of the Mammelus, after having embrued his hands in the blood of two sultans, in 1261 set the crown upon his own head. From this time the Mammelus reigned sultans in Egypt, though always elected out of their own body till, in 1517, the last was defeated by Selim I, Emperor of the Turks, and, after many insults, publicly strangled at Grand Cairo. This Bondocdar was one of the most perfidious and cruel of men, and a most implacable enemy of the Christians. He spent the two first years of his reign in settling his government; he encouraged learning, though himself an illiterate barbarian, and he is said to be the first who established regular posts for correspondence, though the ancient Persian kings had royal messengers placed at proper distances to succeed one another and carry the king's despatches with expedition to all parts of their empire. This tyrant, in the year 1266, the fifth of his reign, resolved to extirpate the Christians in the East. He took and demolished Tripoli, Cæsarea, Tyre, and other places in Syria and Palestine, and, without having any regard to his capitulations and oaths, massacred all the captives who refused to embrace the Mahometan superstition. These calamities awakened the compassion and zeal of St Lewis, and he again took the cross with great solemnity, in a public assembly of princes and prelates, at Paris, on the 25th of March 1267; but before he set out he put the finishing hand to several pious establishments at home, among which we must reckon the house of Sorbon.

Robert Sorbon, a canon and learned doctor at Paris, whom St Lewis honoured with his particular friendship, and often made use of for his confessor, first began this community of Masters of Arts, who were the ablest students or professors in theology. The king was so pleased with the design that he founded this college in the most magnificent manner in 1252, and obtained the confirmation of it by Pope Clement IV. This

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Paris, and *Compromissum Regis et Baronum Angliæ*, in D'Achery, *Spicileg.* t. ii.

house has long been the most renowned college in that university; and by raising the present magnificent building Cardinal Richelieu has erected a monument to his own memory. St Lewis founded in Paris, for poor blind men, the hospital of Quinze Vingt, so called because he placed in it at the first foundation three hundred such patients. He likewise made provisions before his departure for the other poor, whom he maintained out of his private purse; for he had every day one hundred and twenty indigent persons at a table near his own palace, and in Lent and Advent all who presented themselves; and these he often served in person. He kept lists of decayed gentlemen and distressed widows, and young women whom he regularly relieved in every province of his dominions. The saint made his will, in which, having left legacies to almost all the great monasteries of his kingdom, he settled and regulated all the affairs of his own family and those of the state. He brought the Kings of England and Navarre to an accommodation upon some differences that were between them relating to the city of Bayonne; for he always applied himself to do justice, to preserve peace in his own dominions, and to prevent war among his neighbours. Having one day stood godfather to a Jew who was baptized at St Denis, he said, with an affecting energy, to the ambassador of the Mahometan King of Tunis, that to see his master receive that sacrament he would consent with joy to pass the rest of his life in chains under the Saracens. To prepare himself for the crusade he made two retreats at Maubuisson. Towards the expenses of that expedition the pope granted him the tenth penny of all ecclesiastical revenues, and he levied a capitation upon his subjects. He nominated to the regency of the kingdom during his absence Matthew, abbot of St Denis, a man of quality, of the family of the Counts of Vendôme, and Simon of Clermont, Count of Nesle, both persons of known probity and singular prudence. The king's three eldest sons, Philip, John, Count of Nevers, and Peter, Count of Alençon, took the cross to accompany him; as did also Theobald, King of Navarre, Robert, Count of Artois, son to him who was killed at Massour, Guy, Count of Flanders, and many other lords.

The king embarked with his army at Aigues-Mortes upon the 1st of July 1270; and when the fleet was over against Cagliari in Sardinia, a great council was held, in which it was resolved to attack Tunis. The French fleet accordingly proceeded towards Africa and entered the gulf of Tunis, at the head of which that city stands upon a lake which communicates with it. The Saracens, who lined the shore, immediately fled, and, the descent being made without opposition, the French encamped upon an isthmus which separates the gulf of Tunis from another little gulf. They attacked the castle of Carthage, seated fifteen miles from Tunis, and carried it sword in hand. Tunis, Tripoli, Algiers, and many other principalities were erected in Barbary in the eleventh age; for till then

that country had been subject to the sultan of Egypt. Muley Moztanza was at that time King of Tunis, and he prepared to make a vigorous defence; but his troops only showed themselves, and after light skirmishes retired. The French waited for the arrival of the King of Sicily with his fleet to lay siege to Tunis; and his delay was the cause of all their misfortunes; for the heats being excessive in those burning sands, the camp was soon filled with malignant fevers and other epidemical diseases, which were contagious like a pestilence. The king's beloved son, John Tristan, Count of Nevers, a prince of admirable innocence and sanctity, was the first person of distinction that was attacked. He was born at Damiata in Egypt, and was in the twenty-first year of his age when he died in Africa of a dysentery and fever. On the very day of his death, in the beginning of August, the king himself and his eldest son Philip were seized with the same disorder. The king's delicate constitution and weak emaciated body made the distemper more dangerous to him. He continued, however, for some days to act and to give all necessary orders; and particularly to treat with the ambassadors of the Greek Emperor, Michael Palæologus, about the reunion of that church with the Latins. And by his pathetic exhortations he made both these ambassadors afterwards zealous advocates for the union. The principal person was Veccus, chancellor of the church of Constantinople, afterwards patriarch. When the fever and weakness confined him to his bed, he still caused his chaplains to come to his bedside, and he recited with them the whole church office as long as he was able. He had a great cross set near him, so that he could easily turn his eyes upon it. He communicated very often during his illness, which held him one-and-twenty days.

Finding his distemper increase, he called for his eldest son Philip and gave him certain pious instructions which he had drawn up in writing before he left Paris. Two copies hereof are still kept in the Chamber of Accounts at Paris, under this title: "Instructions of King Lewis, the saint, to Philip, his eldest son." The dying admonitions of this great king to him are here inserted in abstract: "My son, before all things I recommend to you that you love God. Be always ready rather to suffer all manner of torments than to commit any mortal sin. When sickness or any other affliction befalls you, return thanks to God for it and bear it courageously, being persuaded that you deserve to suffer much more for having served God ill, and that such tribulations will be your gain. In prosperity give thanks to God with humility and fear lest by pride you abuse God's benefits, and so offend him by those very means by which you ought particularly to improve yourself in his service. Confess your sins frequently, and choose a wise and pious ghostly father who will teach you what to follow and what to shun; let him be one that will boldly reprehend you and make you understand the grievousness of your faults. Hear the divine office devoutly

—meditate affectionately what you ask of God with your mouth; do this with more than ordinary application during the holy sacrifice of the mass, especially after the consecration. Be bountiful, compassionate, and courteous to the poor, and relieve and favour them as much as you can. If anything trouble your mind, reveal it to your ghostly father or to some other grave and discreet person; for by the comfort you will receive you will bear it more patiently. Love to converse with pious persons; never admit any among your familiar friends but such as are virtuous and of good reputation; shun and banish from you the vicious. Make it your delight to hear profitable sermons and discourses of piety. Endeavour to gain the benefit of indulgences and to get the prayers of others. Love all good and abhor all evil. Wherever you are, never suffer anyone to detract or say anything sinful in your presence. Punish all who speak ill of God or his saints. Give often thanks to God for all his benefits. In the administration of justice be upright and severe; hear patiently the complaints of the poor, and in all controversies where your interests are concerned stand for your adversary against yourself till the truth be certainly found out. Whatever you find not to belong to you, restore it without delay to the owner, if the case be clear; if doubtful, appoint prudent men to examine diligently into it. Endeavour to procure peace and justice to all your subjects. Protect the clergy and religious who pray for you and your kingdom. Follow the maxim of my grandfather King Philip, that it is sometimes better to dissemble certain things in ecclesiastics than to repress them with too great violence and scandal. Love and honour the queen your mother, and follow her counsels. Make no war, especially against Christians, without great cause and good advice. If necessity force you to it, let it be carried on without damage to those who are not in fault, and spare the innocent subjects of your enemy as much as possible. Use all your authority to hinder wars among your vassals. Be scrupulous in the choice of good judges and magistrates. Have always a great respect for the Roman Church and the pope, and honour him as your spiritual father. Hinder, to the utmost of your power, all blasphemies, rash oaths, games of chance, drunkenness, and impurity. Never make any extravagant expenses, and never lay on your subjects any heavy or unjust burdens. After my death take care to have a great many masses and prayers said for me in all churches and religious communities in France; and give me a share in all the good works which you shall do. I give you my blessing with the most tender affection that any father can give to a son; and I pray our Lord Jesus Christ to protect and strengthen you in his service, and always to increase his grace in you that you never do anything against his holy will, and that he may be ever faithfully honoured and served by you. I beg this same grace for myself, that we may together see, laud, and honour him for all eternity.”



The holy king gave other instructions to his daughter, the Queen of Navarre. Having settled his affairs and acquitted himself of his duties to others, he desired that no more mention should be made to him of temporal concerns, and applied himself wholly to think only of that great affair which was to be decided betwixt himself and God alone. He scarce spoke any more to anyone but to his confessor. He praised and thanked God for having placed him in his present situation; he prayed with many tears that he would enlighten and show mercy to infidels and sinners, and that his army might be conducted back into their own country without falling into the hands of the enemy, that none of them might be tempted through weakness to deny Christ. His charity, zeal, compunction, humility, and perfect resignation increased in his last moments, and in the fervent exercise of these virtues he prepared his soul to go forth and meet his judge and Redeemer. On the 24th of August, which was Sunday, he received first extreme unction, according to the discipline of that age, and afterwards the viaticum. It was his custom whilst in health, and as long as he was able in his sickness, to creep on his knees from his place in the church up to the altar when he went to communion; he was then too weak to do this; but he would needs get up, and he received the blessed sacrament kneeling by his bedside. He again that day called for the Greek ambassadors, and renewed, in a most pathetic manner, his exhortations to union with the Roman Church. He continued the rest of his time in ardent prayer, especially in acts of the divine love and praise. He lost his speech the next day from nine till twelve o'clock; then recovering it again and lifting up his eyes towards heaven, he repeated aloud those words of the psalmist, "Lord, I will enter into thine house; I will adore in the holy temple and will give glory to thy name." He spoke again at three in the afternoon, but only said, "Into thy hands I commend my soul." Immediately after which he breathed his last in his camp, on the 25th of August, in the year of Christ 1270, being fifty-five years and four months old, and having reigned forty-three years, nine months, and eighteen days.

Many miracles wrought by the intercession of St Lewis were juridically proved; and he was canonized by Boniface VIII in 1279, in the reign of his grandson, Philip the Fair, by whose order one of his ribs was placed in the cathedral at Paris and his head in the holy chapel, in 1305.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 25 :*

ST EBBA, or in English, TABBS, sister to St Oswald, founded an abbey near Durham: ST GREGORY, Abbot, administrator of the diocese of Utrecht: and ST LEWIS, or LOUIS IX, King of France.

AUGUST 26

ST ZEPHYRINUS, POPE

(A.D. 219)

[See Tillemont, *Ant. Sandini, Vitæ. Pont. Rom. ex antiquis Monum. Anastasius with the notes of Bianchini and Muratori. Mandosi, Bibl. Roman.*]

ST ZEPHYRINUS, a native of Rome, succeeded Victor in the pontificate in the year 202, in which Severus raised the fifth most bloody persecution against the church, which continued, not for two years only as Dodwell imagined, but to the death of that emperor in 211, as Ruinart, Berti, and others prove from Sulpicius Severus and other authorities. Under this furious storm this holy pastor was the support and comfort of the distressed flock of Christ, and he suffered by charity and compassion what every confessor underwent. The triumphs of the martyrs were indeed his joy, but his heart received many deep wounds from the fall of apostates and heretics. Neither did this latter affliction cease by the peace which Caracalla restored to the church, and which was not disturbed by Macrinus, by whose contrivance Caracalla was murdered in Mesopotamia in 217, nor by the successor and murderer of this latter, the impure Heliogabalus, who reigned to the year 221. The chief among these heretics were Marcion, Praxeas, Valentine, and the Montanists; for St Optatus testifies<sup>1</sup> that all these were vanquished by Zephyrinus, Bishop of Rome.

Our saint had also the affliction to see the fall of Tertullian, which seems to have been owing partly to his pride and partly to one Proclus, or Proculus, an eloquent Montanist, whom Tertullian highly extolled after he was become an abettor of that heresy. This Proculus was publicly put to confusion at Rome by Caius, a most learned priest of that church, under St Zephyrinus, who was afterwards ordained a regionary bishop, that is, with a commission to preach the gospel without being fixed in any particular see, as Photius assures us. Eusebius, St Jerom, and Photius much commended the dialogue of Caius with Proculus, a work which has not reached our times. Photius tells us that Caius also composed a treatise against Artemon, who believed that Jesus Christ was only a mere man, and several other learned works, from which Eusebius took the account he has given us of the penance of Natalis.<sup>2</sup> This man lived at Rome, and having confessed the faith before the persecutors, underwent torments in defence of it; but afterwards was seduced into heresy by Asclepiodotus and Theodotus the banker, who were both disciples of Theodotus the tanner, whom Victor, Bishop of Rome, had excommunicated for reviving the heresy of Ebion, affirming that Christ was no more than a mere man, though a prophet. These two heretics had persuaded Natalis to suffer them to ordain

<sup>1</sup> St Optat. lib. i. de Schismate, n. 9, et Albaspinæus, not. ib.

<sup>2</sup> Eus. lib. 5. c. 28.

him a bishop of their sect, promising that he should be furnished monthly with one hundred and fifty silver denarii, upwards of three pounds sterling; but God, having compassion on his confessor, warned him by several visions to abandon these heretics, among whom he was detained only by interest and vanity. At length he was whipped a whole night by an angel. The day following he covered himself with sackcloth and ashes, and shedding abundance of tears, went and threw himself at the feet of Zephyrinus; he prostrated himself also before both the clergy and the laity in a manner with which the whole assembly was much affected. However, though he entreated very earnestly and showed the marks of the stripes he had received, it was with much difficulty that St Zephyrinus readmitted him to the communion of the church, granting him, in recompense of his great compunction, an indulgence or relaxation of the severity of the discipline which required a penitential delay and trial. Eusebius tells us, in the same place, that this holy pope exerted his zeal so strenuously against the blasphemies of the two Theodotuses that those heretics treated him in the most contumelious manner; but it was his glory that they called him the principal defender of Christ's divinity. St Zephyrinus filled the pontifical chair seventeen years, dying in 219. He was buried in his own cemetery (comprised in that of Calixtus, as Aringhi shows) on the 26th of August, on which most Martyrologies commemorate him.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 26 :*

ST GELASINUS, a comedian at Heliopolis in Phœnicia, stoned to death on his declaring himself a Christian : ST GENISIUS, martyr, a comedian and the patron saint of the stage : ST GENISIUS OF ARLES, martyr, a public notary in that city and a catechumen, into whose hands the imperial edict against the Christians was put to transcribe; he threw away his pencil and secretly left the town; was taken and beheaded : and ST ZEPHYRINUS, Pope and martyr, a native of Rome; succeeded Victor in 202.

## AUGUST 27

### ST CÆSARIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF ARLES, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 542)

[From his life, extant in two books; the first compiled by his disciple Cyprian, afterwards Bishop of Toulon, and Firminus and Viventius, two other bishops, who assisted him in this work; the second written, in part, by the priest Messianus and the deacon Stephen. All these authors were disciples of St Cæsarius, and witnesses of what they report concerning his virtues and miracles. See this work in Mabillon, *Sæc. Ben.* i, t. i. p. 659. See also this learned compiler, *Annal. Bened.* t. i.; Ceillier, t. xvi. p. 226; Rivet, *Hist. Littér. de la France*, t. iii. p. 190; Gall. Chr. Nov. t. i. p. 535.]

ST CÆSARIUS was born in 470, in the territory of Challons on the Saone, and descended from a family of distinguished piety. When but seven years old he often gave his clothes to poor people whom he met begging. In his youth he laid a good foundation of literature; and, comparing the unquiet scenes of vice, vanity, and folly, in which he saw men too easily engage themselves amidst the hurry of a secular life, with the calmness and security of an amiable retreat, he resolved to renounce the world. Wherefore, at

eighteen years of age, he entreated Sylvester, Bishop of Challons, to cut off his hair and give him the ecclesiastical habit, that he might enter himself in the service of the church. This was done accordingly; but two years after, Cæsarius, out of a desire of attaining still greater perfection, privately withdrew to the monastery of Lerins, which had produced many learned and pious men, under the direction of the abbot Porcarius. In this house he was a perfect model of regularity, meekness, humility, and obedience. The abbot appointed him cellarer, but as human passions creep into recesses the furthest removed from the incentives of vice, some of the monks were offended at his scrupulous severity; and so loud were their complaints that the abbot, though with regret, was forced to discharge him from his office. The saint rejoiced to see himself at liberty to give himself up entirely to the exercises of contemplation and penance; but his great austerities having thrown him into a fit of illness, his abbot sent him to Arles for advice, where he was known by Eonius, the archbishop, who was his countryman and relation. He demanded him of the abbot Porcarius, and immediately ordained him deacon and afterwards priest; soon after, he made him abbot of a monastery built in an island in the Rhone, within the suburbs of the city. Three years after, lying on his death-bed, he recommended him for his successor. The saint fled and hid himself among the Roman sumptuous tombs, a great number of which are remaining to this day near the city, but being discovered, he was obliged to acquiesce in the unanimous election of the clergy and the whole city in 501. He was then thirty years old, and he presided over that church above forty years.

The first thing he did in this station was to regulate the singing of all the canonical hours of the divine office, which he caused to be performed publicly, not only on Sundays, Saturdays, and solemn festivals, as had been the custom at Arles, but every day, as was done in other neighbouring churches. He induced the laity, that were not hindered, to attend constantly the canonical hours. The office was sung in the Latin tongue; but some sung it in the Greek,<sup>1</sup> who were doubtless the foreigners that came from the East to Marseilles, and likewise many inhabitants on that coast, who retained that language, for Marseilles was originally a Greek colony. He strenuously exhorted all persons never to fail, except in cases of the greatest necessity, to assist at all the hours of the divine office, that are sung in the day, and in Lent also, at those of the night.<sup>2</sup> He was very careful to instruct his flock in all the conditions of devout prayer, and to teach them to cry to God with the earnest desires of the heart, not with their lips only, which can be no prayer but only mockery and an insult offered to God; prayer being defined the raising of the heart to God. "A man," said he, "worships that object on which his mind is intent during prayer. Whoever in his prayers thinks of the public place of resort, or of

<sup>1</sup> Append. Regul. St. Cæsarii.

<sup>2</sup> St Cæsar. Serm. 142, n. 2, et Serm. 300.

the house he is building, adores that rather than God.”<sup>1</sup> In order to devote himself the more assiduously to prayer, reading, and preaching, he left to stewards and deacons the care of his temporalities. Knowing that the church puts the poor under the special protection of the bishops, he consecrated to them almost his whole revenue and built many hospitals. He preached on all Sundays and holidays, and often on other days, both morning and evening. If he was hindered he ordered the priests or deacons to read to the people some homilies of the fathers; and he would have some such homily always read after matins and vespers, that the people might never depart from the church without the benefit of some instruction.<sup>2</sup> He taught the faithful to dread, above all other terrible judgments that God ever inflicts on souls in his anger, a spiritual famine of his divine word. He was an enemy to studied discourses. His style is plain, natural, and pleasing. Many of his sermons have sometimes been ascribed to St Ambrose, and especially to St Austin. The Benedictin editors of the works of this latter, in an appendix to his sermons, have published one hundred and two sermons of St Cæsarius. By these it appears that he used to descend very much to particulars, which is most useful in preaching; and he spoke chiefly against those vices which prevailed most, especially against a delay of repentance, the most ordinary stratagem by which the devil betrays souls into eternal perdition. He strongly inculcated the fear of the pains of purgatory for venial sins, and the necessity of effacing them by daily penance.<sup>3</sup> His ordinary exhortations regard prayer, fasting, alms, the pardon of injuries, chastity, and the practice of all manner of good works, especially in Lent, on the Rogation-days, and in other such times of devotion.

St Cæsarius built a nunnery at Arles, and assisted in working with his own hands; he also drew up an excellent rule for these religious women which is still extant. They made their own clothes, and were generally employed in working wool. They had a daily task set them; and were allowed to embroider, and to wash and mend clothes for persons that lived out of the convent. The ornaments of their church were only of woollen or linen cloth, and plain, without embroidery or flowers. Some of these nuns employed themselves in transcribing holy books in a beautiful character.<sup>4</sup> They all read two hours every day; and one of them read to the rest during part of the time they were at work. This monastery, for the sake of uniformity, afterwards exchanged this rule for that of St Bennet. We have likewise a shorter rule for monks, which St Cæsarius gave to Teredus, whom he appointed abbot of a monastery near Arles. Some of his letters relating to monastic duties have reached us, with his testament, in which he leaves his patrimony to his sister's monastery. St Cæsarius presided in the council of Agde, in 506, where several decrees were framed

<sup>1</sup> Serm. 284, in App. St Aug. See also Serm. 83, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Vita St Cæsar. lib. i. n. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Serm. 37, p. 185. App. t. v. Op. St Aug.

<sup>4</sup> Reg. St Cæsarii, n. 3, 11, 17, 18. Vita St Cæsarii, lib. i. n. 33.

for the reformation of manners; also in the second council of Orange, in 529, the canons of which he drew up.<sup>1</sup> In them was condemned the heresy of the Semipelagians, who affirmed that the first desire or beginning of faith and good works is from the creature. This council pronounces an anathema against those who blasphemously affirm that God predestinates any man to damnation; on the other side, it declares that, according to the Catholic faith, God inspires into our souls, by his grace, the beginning of his faith and love, or the first desire or good disposition of the soul towards it, and that he is the author of our conversion. This, and other like points, are confirmed by passages of the holy scriptures and fathers, chiefly St Austin, which establish the necessity of grace to all our good thoughts and actions which conduce to eternal life. St Cæsarius sent the decrees of this council to Rome, to be confirmed by Pope Felix IV, which was executed in the most ample manner by his successor, Boniface II, and from that time the Semipelagians were ranked by the whole church among heretics. The Semipelagians indeed made some noise after the council of Orange, and dared to maintain their errors in the council of Valence soon after the former. St Cæsarius, detained by his infirmities, was not able to go thither in person, but sent Cyprian, Bishop of Toulon, who wrote his life, to defend the truth; of which commission he acquitted himself with great zeal. The answer of the apostolic see, by which the decrees of the council of Orange were confirmed, entirely silenced the advocates of that subtle heresy. St Cæsarius had begun his attack upon it by his book on "Grace and Free-will," which he wrote as an antidote against the poisonous work of Faustus of Riez; but so complete was the victory which he gained over it by the council of Orange that this formidable monster was entirely crushed, and the confirmation of this council closes the history of that heresy.

St Cæsarius had his share in the public calamities of the age in which he lived. The city of Arles was at that time subject to Alaric, King of the Visigoths, who was master of the greatest part of Spain and Languedoc and great part of Provence. It was suggested to this prince that the archbishop being born a subject to the King of Burgundy, he did all that lay in his power to bring the territory of Arles under his dominion, than which nothing could be a more notorious calumny; for he prayed night and day on his bended knees that all nations might enjoy peace, and the cities be free from tumults and insurrections. However, Alaric, without the least examination, banished him to Bordeaux. During his residence in that city, a fire happening one night to break out, the people ran in crowds to him and besought him to put up his prayers for the extinction of the flames. The blessed man prostrated himself in prayer before the fire,

<sup>1</sup> See l'Hist. du Pelagianisme, printed at Avignon in 1763, t. ii c. 24. pp. 188-196; Hincmar, lib. de Prædest. p. 12 et 22.

which immediately subsided: hereupon he was regarded as the saver of the city. Alaric having discovered his innocence, recalled him from his exile, and condemned his accuser to be stoned, but pardoned him at the earnest intercession of the saint.

At his return to Arles, all the people went to meet him, singing psalms and holding wax tapers in their hands; and they thought they were indebted to his prayers for plentiful showers of rain that fell at that time, after a long drought. Clovis, King of the Franks, in conjunction with the Burgundians, defeated and slew Athalaric in Poitou in the year 507, the twenty-third of his reign. His young son Alaric fled into Spain, was proclaimed King of the Visigoths, and was powerfully protected by Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths in Italy, whose grandson that prince was by a daughter. The French and Burgundians laid siege to Arles in 508; during which the Goths threw St Cæsarius into prison upon suspicion that he had attempted to deliver up the city to the besiegers; but he was cleared and set at liberty. The siege was raised and a great number of prisoners were brought into the city, and the churches were filled with them. St Cæsarius was moved exceedingly at their condition; for they were in want both of clothes and victuals. He furnished them with both, and employed in relieving them the whole treasury of his church. He stripped the pillars and rails of the silver with which they were adorned, and melted down and gave away the very censers, chalices, and patens, saying, "Our Lord celebrated his last supper in mean earthen dishes, not in plate; and we need not scruple to part with his vessels for the ransom of those whom he has redeemed with his own life. I would fain know if those who censure what we do would not be glad to be ransomed themselves in like manner, were the same misfortune to befall them?" St Cæsarius took the utmost care of the sick, whom he provided with a very spacious house, where they might hear, at their ease, the divine office performed, and where they were carefully attended. The poor had ever a very easy access to him, and he gave a strict charge to the servant who waited on him always to see whether there was not some poor at the door who was afraid of coming in.

After the death of the King of the Visigoths, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, King of Italy, seized upon those dominions in Languedoc and Spain, though they soon after chose again a prince of their own. The excessive charity of St Cæsarius towards the prisoners displeased King Theodoric, who ordered him to be apprehended and brought under a strong guard to Ravenna. When the saint came into the king's presence and saluted him, Theodoric, seeing his venerable aspect and intrepid air, rose up, took from his head the ornament with which it was covered, and returned his salute in a very obliging manner. After many kind speeches, when St Cæsarius was gone out, Theodoric said to those about him, "May God

punish those who have been the occasion of so holy a man's undertaking so long a journey without cause. I trembled when he came in; he has the countenance of an angel. I can harbour no thoughts to the prejudice of such a person." He sent him to his house a silver basin of sixty pounds weight, with three hundred pieces of gold, and ordered the bearer to say to him, "The king, your son, holy bishop, entreats you to accept this present, and to make use of the basin for his sake." St Cæsarius, who never used plate at his table except a few silver spoons, sold the basin publicly and ransomed several captives with the money. When the king was told this, and also that the bishop's door was so much crowded with poor people that it was impossible to get near it, he expatiated so much upon this charity that the senators and the rest of the quality strove who should bestow the most bountiful alms, to be distributed by the hands of St Cæsarius. They even said publicly that God had been very gracious to them in giving them the sight of so apostolical a man. At Ravenna he restored to health, by his prayers, the son of a certain widow who, with many tears, more expressive of her gratitude than words could be, besought him to take her son into his service and carry him along with him into Gaul.

From Ravenna St Cæsarius went to Rome, where Pope Symmachus, the clergy, nobility, and people very much desired to see him. The pope gave him the pallium, and confirmed in his favour the privileges of the church of Arles, appointed him vicar of the apostolic see, and ordained that he should superintend all ecclesiastical affairs in Gaul and Spain. These things were transacted in the year 513. In the same year this pope published certain decretals to remove several abuses in Gaul. By one of these he forbade the alienation of church lands, unless they were given to clergymen for their services, or to supply their wants, only for the term of their lives.<sup>1</sup> This is thought to be the origin of ecclesiastical benefices; for anciently the bishops had the administration of the whole revenue of their churches, allowing a part for the maintenance of their clergy. St Cæsarius returned to Arles in 514, and continued to edify and instruct his flock many years longer. In the seventy-second year of his age, being broken with infirmities and finding himself near death, he asked how long it was to the festival of St Austin, saying, "I hope I shall die about that time; you know how much I always loved his truly Catholic doctrine." He caused himself to be carried in a chair to the monastery of his nuns, whom he endeavoured to prepare and comfort for the affliction which he knew his death would give them; but whatever he could say rather seemed to augment their affliction. He made them a moving exhortation. They were above two hundred in number, and their superior was called Cæsaria, and had succeeded his sister of the same name. Having given them his blessing, he returned to the metropolitan church, and died in the presence

<sup>1</sup> Symmach. Ep. 5. p. 1295.



of several holy bishops and priests, on the eve of the feast of St Austin, in 542. His relics healed a great number of sick people, and he wrought several like miracles whilst he was living, as the authors of his life testify.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 27 :*

ST CÆSARIUS, Archbishop of Arles, 542 : ST HUGH OF LINCOLN, a Christian child aged eleven, killed by Jews in 1255 : ST JOSEPH CALASANCTIUS, founder of the Poor Regular Clergy of the pious schools of the Mother of God : ST MALRUBIUS, lived as a hermit in Scotland, martyred by the Norwegians : ST PÆMEN or PASTOR, Abbot, an illustrious ancient Father of the Desert who retired into the wilderness of Scetē in Egypt : and ST SYAGRIUS, Bishop of Autun.

## AUGUST 28

### ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

(A.D. 430)

[From his works, and from his life, written by St Possidius, his disciple, Bishop of Calama. See the history of his life, diligently compiled by Tillemont, t. xiii. See also Ceillier, t. xi., xii.; Orsi, t. viii.-xii.; the life of St Austin, compiled in Latin by F. Lancelot, and that in English by the learned and pious Mr Abraham Woodhead, fellow of University College, Oxon, who embraced the Catholic faith about the year 1666, and died in devout retirement at Hoxton, near London, in 1678.]

THIS perfect model of true penitents, this triumphing champion of our holy faith and confounder of heresies, this bright light and most glorious doctor of the Church of Christ, was born on the 13th of November, in the year 354, at Tagaste, a small town of Numidia, in Africa, not far from Hippo, but at some distance from the sea, which the saint had never seen till he was grown up. His parents were of good condition, yet not very rich; his father Patricius was an idolater, and of a hasty choleric disposition; but by the holy example and prudent conduct of St Monica, his wife, he at length learned the humility and meekness of the Christian religion, and was baptized a little before his death. She bore him several children; St Austin speaks of his brother Navigius, who left a family behind him, and of a sister who died an abbess. Our saint had the misfortune to fall, in his youth, like the prodigal son, into the most frightful gulf of vice and spiritual miseries, of which himself has drawn a lively portraiture in the first books of his Confessions, both for his own greater humiliation, and to deplore his blindness and ingratitude towards God, to set forth the infinite riches of the divine mercy, and to propose the example of his own fall as a warning to others.

St Austin begins his Confessions by adoring the unchangeable and incomprehensible majesty of God, and by praising his infinite mercy, which in a wonderful manner brought him into this dying life (shall I call it, says he), or living death, into which he himself knew not how or whence he came. The saint thanks Him who gave him this being, formed his body, furnished it with senses, and beautified it with a comely form, and who bestowed on him a mind or soul; from his birth provided him food

and constantly attended him with the comforts of his mercy, commanding him to praise his adorable majesty for all these things, to confess to Him, and sing to His holy name, who is the Most High.<sup>1</sup> The saint cries out to God<sup>2</sup> "Let thy mercy suffer me to speak; what am I to Thee that thou shouldst command me to love Thee, and shouldst be angry with me, and threaten me with great miseries if I love Thee not? Is it then a small misery not to love Thee?" He confesses, with regret, that he began to offend his gracious God even in that age which is falsely called innocent, which was passed away without leaving any traces in his memory, and which was, with respect to the darkness of his oblivion of it, much like to that which he passed in his mother's womb. He accused himself thus from what he observed in other children; for he perceived that little ones are easily possessed with jealousy, anger, and revenge, which they sometimes express by their pale and envious looks. He laments that custom should make it appear against reason for children in this tender age to suffer correction for what certainly deserves reprehension, and what is strengthened by being flattered, and becomes sinful upon the first dawning of the use of reason; whereas there is no age which is not docile and capable of some degree of correction by the senses, whereby the first seeds of the passions may be crushed.<sup>3</sup> By the care of his pious mother he was instructed in the Christian religion, and taught to pray.<sup>4</sup> He was made a catechumen by being marked with the sign of the cross, and by blessed salt being put in his mouth; and whilst he went to school in his own town, falling dangerously ill, he desired baptism, and his mother got everything ready for it; but he on a sudden grew better, and it was deferred.<sup>5</sup> This was done lest he should afterwards stain the grace of that sacrament, considering the great billows of temptations that were like to beset him after his childhood. This custom of deferring baptism for fear of sinning under the weight and obligations of that sacrament St Austin most justly condemns; but then the want of a sense of the sanctity of that sacrament and the frequent perfidiousness and sacrileges of Christians in defiling it by relapsing into sin is an abuse which, in these latter ages, calls for our tears and for all our zeal. The church has long since forbid the baptism of infants ever to be deferred; but it is one of the principal duties of pastors to instruct the faithful in the rigorous obligations which that sacrament lays them under, and to teach them highly to value and to watch carefully to preserve the grace which they received by it.

Patricius, who was a worldly man and continued still an idolater, perceived that his son Austin had an excellent genius and a wonderful disposition for learning, and, with a view to his future preferment, spared nothing to breed him up a scholar. Here the saint thanks God, that though

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. i. c. 6, 7.<sup>4</sup> Ib. c. 11.<sup>2</sup> Ib. c. 5.<sup>3</sup> Ib. c. 11.<sup>5</sup> Ib. c. 7.

the persons who pressed him to learn had no other end in view than to satisfy a desire of "penurious riches and ignominious glory," yet divine Providence made a good use of their error, and forced him to learn for his great profit and manifold advantage.<sup>1</sup> But herein he accuses himself that he sinned, often studying only by constraint, disobeying the commands of his parents and masters, not writing, reading, or minding his lessons so much as was required of him; and this he did, not for want of wit or memory, but out of the love of play. He dreaded correction, and prayed to God, when a little one, with great earnestness that he might escape punishment at school, regarding it as his great and grievous evil; for which dread he was derided by his masters and parents.

Though the age of children is frequently indocile to severe discipline and stands in need of restraint, yet it is generally better governed by generous motives of virtue and a filial awe than by much servile fear; and St Austin seems to complain of austere pedagogues who multiply to youth that labour and sorrow through which the sons of Adam are all obliged to pass; whereas their tasks might often be made in some degree agreeable, and scholars might be induced to love them upon principles of duty and virtue; for "no one," says the saint, "doth well what he doth against his will." St Austin humbly acknowledges that he at that age fell also into vanity, pleasing himself with the pride of surpassing his companions at play, and loving to have his ears scratched with vain praises that they might itch the more. A worse curiosity drew him to the dangerous entertainments of those that were older—public shows, plays, and other diversions of the theatre. He declares that God justly turns sin into its own chastisement, its pleasure always leaving a sting and filling the mind with gall and bitterness. "For thou hast ordained it, and so it is," says he, "that every inordinate affection should be to itself its own punishment and torment."

In his studies he liked Latin very well, having learned that language from his nurses and others with whom he conversed. Whilst he was little, he hated Greek and the perplexing rules of the grammar of that tongue; and, for want of understanding it sufficiently, he could not then relish the beauties of Homer; but the Latin poets became his early delight. Herein he laments that he filled his head with the wanderings of Æneas, whilst he forgot his own wanderings; and he shed tears for the death of Dido when he beheld himself with dry eyes perishing from God, miserable wretch as he was; "for what can be more miserable," says he, "than one that is in misery, yet hath no compassion for himself? than one who wept for the death of Dido, occasioned by her love for Æneas, yet wept not for his own death, caused by not loving Thee, O Lord?"<sup>2</sup> Poesy, however, not only enlarged his knowledge of languages, and exceedingly opened the faculties of his mind, especially that of invention, the ground of a creating

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. i. c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. c. 13.

or original genius, but this study also gave him a sublimity of thought and expression, by its exalted eloquence, by which, with elegance and decent propriety, it raises the mind above nature, which rhetoric closely confines within its bounds; and to poetry he was indebted for the art of employing in oratory frequent lively images and bold touches.

The saint thanks God for many good endowments of his childhood,<sup>1</sup> and for his progress in learning, all the fruits of which he offers to God. He learned to be more afraid of uttering a solecism in discourse than of being guilty of envy, or of deceiving his tutor, masters, or others by lies for the sake of play,<sup>2</sup> for which sins he grievously laments. He also deplores the sins of theft which he committed by stealing little things out of his parents' cellar, or from their table, either to gratify his gluttony or to give to his playfellows. He confesses, in particular, that one night he and a company of wicked youths stole some pears from a neighbour's tree near his father's garden, out of mere wantonness and a lust of doing what they ought not to do; for the stolen fruit was bad and they only threw it to the hogs.<sup>3</sup> In this sin he laments the strange seduction of bad company, and of that friendship which is an enemy to the soul; because some among such companions say, "Let us go, let us do it," everyone is ashamed not to be shameless. The most fatal rock against which Austin split was the execrable vice of impurity into which he fell in the sixteenth year of his age. He was led into this gulf by reading lascivious plays in Terence, by sloth, by frequenting stage entertainments, and by bad company and example.

Austin went to school first in his own town; then his father sent him to Madaura, a neighbouring city, where he studied grammar, poetry, and rhetoric. When he was sixteen years old his father made him return to Tagaste, designing to send him to finish his studies at Carthage; but before he executed this project, he kept him a whole year at home. During this time the young man, slighting the good advice of his mother, fell into lewd company, being induced to it by idleness and by the indulgence of his father, who had not yet received baptism, and whose only ambition was to make this son a scholar.

Youth ought to be constantly applied to some serious employment; a short interval of idleness between coming from school and going to business often enervates the mind, takes off the edge of its activity and love of application, and destroys the advantage of good habits and the fruit of whole years; and the disorder is often beyond recovery.

Austin went to Carthage towards the end of the year 370, in the beginning of the seventeenth year of his age. There he easily held the foremost place in the school of rhetoric, and applied himself to his studies with so much eagerness and pleasure that it was with great difficulty that

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. i. c. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. c. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. ii. c. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9.

he was drawn from them. Vincent the Rogatist, his enemy, acknowledges<sup>1</sup> that he always loved decency and good manners even in his irregularities; but this was no more than a worldly and exterior decency: for he plunged himself headlong into the filth of impurity. The world authorises many criminal occasions of vice, which, by the sanction of example, pass among many for innocent. This reflection extorted from St Austin after his conversion the following complaint: "Woe to thee, O torrent of custom among men! Who will resist thee? Who will stop thy impetuous tide?" He was by the force of example drawn into wicked company and dangerous amusements, especially into a fondness for tragedy and other stage entertainments which, being full of the images of the most infamous passions, entertained that fire which had already begun to devour him.

His father Patricius died soon after he had been baptized, in 371; but Austin still continued his studies at Carthage. Among the works of Cicero, which he read in the nineteenth year of his age, he fell upon one which is now lost, entitled, "*Hortensius*," which was an exhortation to philosophy. By it he was strongly affected, and was inflamed with a great desire and love of wisdom and filled with a contempt of riches and honours, and from that time laid aside all expectation of magistracies and high worldly preferments. Being only twenty years old, he heard the masters speak with great boasting of Aristotle's book of the ten categories or predicaments; he therefore eagerly read it over by himself, and understood it all without a master. But this book led him to place God in the category of substance and to reason of him in a corporeal manner.<sup>2</sup> He at length grew weary of reading Cicero's "*Hortensius*" and the books of the heathen philosophers, because Christ was not mentioned in them, whose name he had sucked in, as it were, with his mother's milk and deeply retained. He desired, therefore, to read the holy scriptures; but was offended with the simplicity of the style; and swelling with pride as if he was endued with a great genius, he could not relish their humility or penetrate their spirit.<sup>3</sup> Soon after this he fell into the sect of the Manichees, in which he continued between eight and nine years, from the nineteenth to the twenty-eighth year of his age. His vanity was soothed and flattered by the Manichees, who pretended to try everything by the test of bare reason, and scoffing at all those who paid a due deference to the authority of the Catholic Church, as if they shackled reason and walked in trammels. It was by this artifice that he was seduced and caught in their nets; they promised to show him everything by demonstration, banishing all mystery, and calling faith weakness, credulity, and ignorance. "They said that, setting aside dreadful authority, they would lead men to God and free them from all error by reason alone."<sup>4</sup> Isaac Beausobre hence infers that

<sup>1</sup> Apud. St Aug. Ep. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Conf. lib. iii. c. 4, 5.

<sup>3</sup> St Aug. Conf. lib. iv. c. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Seneca, Ep. 104.

before St Austin's time Catholics furiously extolled the authority of the church.<sup>1</sup> He ought to have added that St Austin afterwards, upon mature consideration, found that it is highly rational, with regard to supernatural truths, to acquiesce in the testimony of God, manifested by the authority of the church derived from him, guided by his unerring Spirit, in conserving unviolated his divine revelation, of which we have the strongest assurance given us by the same revelation, confirmed to us by evident miracles, and other motives of credibility to which, upon an impartial review, no one can prudently refuse assent.

Modern Socinians and others who boast mightily of making reason their only guide are driven by their own principles into the most glaring inconsistencies and monstrous absurdities against reason itself, as St Austin afterwards discovered of the ancient Manichees.

Writing to his friend Honoratus, who was still detained in those errors, to which he had himself persuaded him, he lays open this to have been the source of his ruin, that relying too much on the strength of his own reason, he despised the direction and authority of the Catholic Church. "You know, Honoratus," says he,<sup>2</sup> "that upon no other ground we adhered to these men. What else made me, rejecting, for almost nine years together, the religion which was instilled into me in my childhood, a follower and diligent hearer of these men, only their saying that we are overawed by superstition, and that faith is obtruded on us without reason being given: whereas they tie none to believe, except upon the truth being first examined and cleared up. Who by such promises would not have been inveigled? especially a young man, desirous of truth, and by a reputation among learned men in the schools already grown proud and talkative. They derided the simplicity of the Catholic faith, which commanded men to believe before they were taught by evident reason what was truth." St Austin frequently teaches, in his other works, that this is the general method of other heretics, and the usual occasion of miscarriages in faith. "All heretics generally deceive by the ostentatious promise of science; and reprehend the simplicity of believers."

St Austin tells us that the chief questions which gravelled him, and to which the Manichees promised a solution, were, Whence came evil? and the difficulty of forming a clear apprehension of a spirit; whence he was persuaded to imagine God to be corporeal; and by listening to those masters of error he was brought by insensible degrees to such folly as to believe that when a fig is gathered both it and its mother-tree weep with milky tears; and that if some Manichæan saint should eat it (after it has been plucked by another's crime and not his own) particles of good intelligences, or rather of the Deity, which was imprisoned in the fruit, are restored to liberty.<sup>3</sup> However, soon perceiving that these heretics were more

<sup>1</sup> Horat. Ep. 2, v. 40. Ovid.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. de Utilitate Credendi, c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Conf. lib. iii. c. 10.

dextrous in disputing against others than in defending or proving their own tenets, on this account he remained rather a seeker than a perfect Manichee, and continuing among them only in the rank of a hearer, he would never be initiated among their Elect. In the meantime his heart was swelled with pride by his success in frequent disputations with several Catholics, in which by the subtilty of his wit and quickness in reasoning, he seemed unhappily victorious; and he engaged several of his friends in the same errors with himself; among others, Alipius and his patron and benefactor Romanianus, in whose house he lodged during his studies at Carthage.

In the twentieth year, to ease his mother of the charge of his education, he left Carthage, and returning to her set up a school of grammar and rhetoric at Tagaste; but she, who was a good Catholic and never ceased to weep and pray for his conversion, forbore to sit at the same table or to eat with him, hoping by this severity and abhorrence of his heresy to make him enter into himself. Some time after, finding her own endeavours to reclaim him unsuccessful, she repaired to a certain bishop, and with tears besought him to discourse with her son upon his errors. The prelate excused himself for the present, alleging that her son was yet unfit for instruction, being intoxicated with the novelty of his heresy and bloated with conceit, having often puzzled several Catholics who had entered the lists with him and were more zealous than learned. "Only pray to our Lord for him," said he; "your son will at length discover his error and impiety." She still persisted, with many tears, importuning him that he would see her unhappy son; but he dismissed her, saying "Go your way; God bless you; it cannot be that a child of those tears should perish." Which words she received as an oracle from heaven.<sup>1</sup> She was also comforted by a dream in which she seemed to see a young man who, having asked the cause of her sorrow and daily tears, bid her be of good courage, for where she was, there her son also was. Upon which she, looking about, saw Austin standing upon the same plank with herself. This assurance, and her confidence in the divine mercy, gave her present comfort; but she was yet to wait several years for the accomplishment of her earnest desires, and to obtain it by many importunate prayers and tears, which she could not but put forth in abundance, while she saw her beloved son an enemy to that God whom she loved far more than her son or herself.

Austin had a dear friend, who had been for several years the companion of his studies, to whom he had been accustomed to unbosom himself without reserve in all his cares. This individual companion was in the bloom of life and, through his persuasion, had been involved in the Manichæan errors. Falling sick, he was converted to the Catholic Church and baptized. Austin rallied him on that score, but he with an unexpected liberty told him

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. iii. c. 12.

that if he meant to continue his friend he should speak to him no more in that manner; and that if he did, he should fly from him with horror and regard him as his enemy. This young man soon after relapsed into a fever, like his first distemper, and died in great sentiments of piety and religion. The loss of this friend was a grievous affliction to Austin.

Not being able any longer to bear his native country, he removed to Carthage, where time and new connections wore away his grief. Ambition and vanity had likewise a share in that step, the capital of Africa being a greater theatre for the displaying of his abilities. At Carthage he opened a school of rhetoric, gained great applause in the public disputations, and carried away the principal prizes in the theatre for the best performances in poesy and oratory; but he laments his blindness that he was seduced by pride in the sciences and by superstition, under a false name of religion; following in the first the emptiness of popular glory, the shouts of the theatre, and contentious disputes for crowns of bay and such like fooleries; and seeking in a false religion to be purged from the sins of his intemperance and lusts, by carrying food to the elect and saints, which was to be moulded in their stomachs into angels and gods, by whom he was to be delivered.<sup>1</sup> Considering this his folly, he cries out to God, in a feeling and humble acknowledgment of his own weakness: "What am I to myself without thee, but my own guide falling headlong down a precipice!" He began to apply himself to judiciary astrology, but soon abandoned that fallacious study, being informed that it consisted altogether in tricks and deceit. When he was about six or seven-and-twenty years of age, he wrote two or three books, *De Pulchro et Apto*, or, "On what is beautiful or decent and fit in things"; which work is lost. He began, about that time, to dislike the stories related by the Manichees concerning the system of the world, the heavenly bodies, and the elements. "This kind of knowledge," said he, "is not essential to religion; but it is essential not to lie, and not to boast of knowing what we know not."

There was in Africa at that time a Manichæan bishop, named Faustus, much celebrated by those of his sect as a wonderful man, and perfectly skilled in all manner of sciences. Austin had waited with great impatience for his coming to Carthage, hoping he would satisfy all his doubts; but when he arrived, he found, by a long conference, that he was a good speaker, but said no more than the rest of the Manichees, only explained himself with greater grace and facility. Austin wanted something more than words, and was too solid a wit to be contented with mere form; and, perceiving how little satisfaction he received from this great doctor of the sect, he from that time disapproved it entirely, being then twenty-nine years of age. Nevertheless, his prepossessions against the Catholic faith hindered him from turning his inquiries on that side; so that, after

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iv. c. 1.



he despaired of discovering the truth in his own sect, not knowing where to find anything better, he determined still to remain content with what he had stumbled upon till he should fall upon something that should appear more reasonable and satisfactory.<sup>1</sup>

Austin, whilst he remained in this fluctuation of mind, being disgusted at the disorderly behaviour of the students at Carthage, resolved to go to Rome, where scholars were kept under stricter discipline. This foreign journey he undertook without his mother's consent, and herein he praises the divine goodness, which, by his irregularities themselves, brought him to their cure; by afflicting his mother, and refusing to hear her present request, by which she prayed that her son might not sail, God made her redouble her earnestness and her tears that he might accomplish the main thing which she always requested, which was the conversion of this son. At Rome he applied himself to the Manichees, and lodged with one of that sect, merely on account of former acquaintance, and because he was not yet resolved on any other religion. Soon after his arrival in that city he fell sick of a violent fever, and seemed reduced by it to the very point of dying, and perishing for ever.<sup>2</sup> "For whither had I gone," says he, "if I had then died, but into those flames and torments which I deserved?" But it pleased God to raise him from this dangerous sickness, through the prayers of his mother, which she never ceased to put forth for his conversion, though she was then absent and ignorant of his present danger. Whilst he professed rhetoric in that great city, his school was frequented by the most famous wits of that age, and none ever went from it without either being struck with admiration at his learning and parts, which were rendered more amiable by the natural sweetness of his temper, or being moved with envy at the honour he acquired in his disputations; but finding the scholars there often unjust enough to change frequently their masters, in order to cheat them of their salary for teaching, he grew weary of the place; and it happening that deputies were sent from Milan, where the Emperor Valentinian the younger kept his court, to Symmachus, prefect of Rome, who was himself a great orator, requiring that he should send thither some able master of rhetoric, Austin made suit to be the man. He was strongly recommended by several persons of consideration, and having given Symmachus proofs of his capacity, was chosen by him, and accordingly sent.

At Milan he was received with great applause, and the most ingenious persons of that city were soon convinced that he deserved the high opinion they had entertained of him. The holy bishop, St Ambrose, gave him particular marks of his respect. St Austin was very desirous of being acquainted with him, not as with a teacher of the truth, which he thought impossible to be found among the Catholics, but only as a person of great

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. v. c. 10.

<sup>2</sup> St Aug. Conf. lib. v. c. 9.

learning and reputation, and one who was obliging and friendly to him. He frequently attended his sermons, not with any desire of profiting by them, but to gratify his curiosity, and to inform himself whether his eloquence answered the fame he had heard concerning him. He was very intent upon his words, and found his discourse elegant and more learned than that of Faustus, the Manichæan, yet not so pleasing in the delivery. Austin aimed only at gratifying his ears, and despised the matter which the bishop treated: yet his doctrine, like a distilling rain, insensibly made impressions on his heart and caused the seeds of virtue to spring forth therein. He began to think there was good argument and reason in what he said, and that the Manichees unjustly derided and cast contempt on the writings of the law and the prophets; but he was not yet convinced of the goodness of the Catholic cause, and he continued in suspense, withholding his heart from giving any assent for fear of a precipice; though he learned from St Ambrose's discourses that Catholics did not hold what the Manichees charged them with.<sup>1</sup>

In the search of truth he was still perplexed about the origin of evil, and suffered a secret anguish in his soul to which only God was witness; for neither was his time sufficient nor his tongue able to express the inward tumult of his soul.<sup>2</sup> He also found great difficulty in conceiving God to be a pure spirit, without any corporeal extension, having been accustomed to the gross imagination of apprehending him as corporeal and extended through all the empire of his goodness, according to the idea of the Manichees, which differed entirely from that of the Anthropomorphites, who apprehended the divine substance to resemble a human body.

In correcting this false notion he received great light by reading the works of Plato and some other philosophers of his sect, who speak of the Eternal Word, and of incorporeal substances, in a manner which seemed to him clear and perspicuous.<sup>3</sup> He became sensible of the necessity of admitting incorporeal substances, though (our ideas of them being conveyed to us chiefly through the inlets of our senses) we apprehend them imperfectly, and express them by analogical terms drawn from corporeal images. He therefore acknowledged that God must necessarily be an eternal, infinite, incomprehensible, and unchangeable being, and a most pure and perfect spirit; also that there is nothing in the creation absolutely evil.<sup>4</sup> He seemed to hear the divine voice crying to him from on high, "I am the meat of those that are grown up: grow thou up, and thou shalt feed upon me; neither shalt thou convert me into thee, like thy corporeal food; but thou shalt be changed into me."<sup>5</sup>

He found the writings of the Platonic philosophers bred in his soul pride, and not humility, making him to have a mind to seem wise, and

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. vi. c. 3.<sup>2</sup> Ib. vii. c. 7.<sup>3</sup> Ib. lib. vii. c. 1, 9, 10, 17, 20.<sup>4</sup> Ib. c. 13, 14, 16; lib. xiii. c. 28, 31.<sup>5</sup> Ib. c. 10.

leaving him full of his punishment, instead of teaching him to bewail his own misery. Finding nothing in them about the great mystery of man's redemption, or Christ's incarnation, he with great eagerness of mind betook himself to read the New Testament, especially the writings of St Paul, in which he then began to take great delight. Here he found the testimonies of the Old Testament admirably illustrated, the glory of heaven displayed, and the way clearly pointed out which leadeth us thither; here he learned that which he had long felt, that he had a law in his members warring against the law in his mind, and that nothing could deliver him from this body of death but the grace of Jesus Christ. He perceived an infinite difference between the doctrine of him who styled himself the last of the apostles, and that of those proud philosophers who esteemed themselves the greatest of men.<sup>1</sup> Austin himself was now convinced of the truth and excellency of that virtue which the divine law prescribes in the Catholic Church, but was still prejudiced with such an apprehension of insuperable difficulties in the practice as kept him from resolutely entering upon it.

Under his difficulties he addressed himself to Simplician, a priest of Milan, whom Pope Damasus had formerly sent from Rome to St Ambrose to be his instructor and tutor, who was then beloved by him as his father, and afterwards succeeded him in the bishopric of Milan. This holy man was in a very advanced age, and had served God with great piety from his youth. To him Austin gave an account of the round of his wanderings and errors, and mentioned his reading certain books of the Platonics, which had been translated into Latin by Victorinus, who had formerly been professor of rhetoric in Rome, and died a Christian. Simplician commended his choice of these books, and related to him how himself had been instrumental in the conversion of this Victorinus; for that very learned old man, who taught most of the senators of Rome, and had the honour of a statue set up in the Forum, embraced the faith of Christ. A fear of offending his friends, the Roman senators, those proud worshippers of devils, from whom he apprehended great storms of malice would fall upon him, made him defer his baptism for some time; but being encouraged by Simplician, he overcame that temptation, and, trampling the world under his feet, was instructed and baptized by him. When Julian the Apostate forbade Christians to teach the sciences, Victorinus with joy quitted his school. Austin was strongly touched by so generous an example, and he envied the felicity of Victorinus more than he admired his fortitude; but was still held captive under the slavery of his passions.

He mournfully complains as follows: "I sighed and longed to be delivered, but was kept fast bound, not with exterior chains or irons,

<sup>1</sup> Conf. c. 21.

but with my own iron will. The enemy held my will, and of it he had made a chain with which he had fettered me fast; for, from a perverse will, was created wicked desire or lust, and the serving this lust produced custom, and custom, not resisted, produced a kind of necessity, with which, as with certain links fastened one to another, I was kept close shackled in this cruel slavery. I had no excuse, as I pretended formerly when I delayed to serve thee, because I had not yet certainly discovered thy truth; for now I knew it, yet I was still fettered. The load of the world agreeably kept me down, as it happens in sleep; and the desires by which I meditated to rise were but like the strugglings of such as would awake, who nevertheless are still overcome with drowsiness and fall back into their former slumber, whilst a heavy laziness benumbs their limbs, though reason tells them it is wrong, and that it is high time to arise. I had nothing now to reply to thee when thou saidst to me, 'Arise thou that sleepest, and rise up from the dead, and Christ will enlighten thee.'<sup>1</sup> I had nothing, I say, at all to reply, being now convinced by thy faith, but certain lazy and drowsy words, *Presently, by and by, let me alone a little whole longer*; but this *presently* did not *presently* come; these delays had no bounds, and this *little while* ran out to a long time." It happened in the meantime that one Pontitianus, an African, who had an honourable employment in the emperor's court, and was a very religious man, came one day to pay a visit to Austin and Alipius, and finding a book of St Paul's epistles lying on the table, took occasion to speak to them of the life of St Antony, and was surprised to find that his name had been to that hour unknown to them. They were astonished to hear of miracles so well attested, done so lately in the Catholic Church, and did not know before Pontitianus mentioned it that there was a monastery full of fervent servants of God without the walls of that very city where they lived, under the care of St Ambrose. Pontitianus, seeing them very attentive to him, discoursed long upon this subject, and related that, whilst the court was at Triers, one afternoon, when the emperor was entertained with public sports in the circus, he and three others went out to walk in the gardens near the city, he with one companion going one way, and the other two another; and that these two happened to light upon a little cottage where dwelt certain servants of God poor in spirit, of whom is the kingdom of God, and there they found a book in which was written the life of St Antony. This life one of them began to read, and then to admire, and soon to be inflamed: and whilst he was yet reading, to think of embracing the same kind of life; for he was one of those who were called agents in the emperor's service, whose business it was to collect taxes, make provisions for the court, and execute particular commissions by order of the emperor or the prefect of the prætorium. Then suddenly filled with

<sup>1</sup> Eccl. v.

holy love and zeal, and a sober shame, and angry at himself, he cast his eyes upon his friend, and said to him, "Tell me, I pray, with all the pains we take, what doth our ambition aspire to? what is it we seek, and propose to ourselves? Can we have any greater hopes in the court than to arrive at the friendship and favour of the emperor? And when this is obtained, what is there in it that is not brittle and full of dangers? Through how many dangers do we ascend to this greater danger? And how long will it last? But behold, if I please, I become this moment the friend and favourite of God, and such I remain for ever." He turned his eyes again to the book, labouring in the inward conflict of his mind and in the throes of a new life. In the meantime his heart was interiorly changed, and entirely emptied and disengaged from the world; he often fetched deep sighs as he went on reading, till his soul being wholly subdued by divine grace, he took a firm resolution that moment to enter upon a better course. "I have now," said he, "bid a final adieu to that our former hope, and am fully resolved to have no other pursuit but that of serving God. I begin from this very hour, in this very place. If you do not imitate my retreat, do not obstruct my resolution." The other answered that he would constantly adhere to his companion in so noble a warfare for so high a reward. Pontitianus and the other that had walked with him came to the same place, and put them in mind of returning home; but upon hearing the resolution they had taken, they congratulated with them, and took leave of them, recommending themselves to their prayers. Both of them that remained in the cottage had been contracted to young ladies, who, as soon as they heard this, consecrated their virginity in like manner to God.

This example and the discourse of Pontitianus had a powerful influence on the mind of St Austin, and raised strong emotions in his breast, and he saw, as it were in a glass, his own filthiness and deformity, which caused him to loathe and abhor himself. In his former half desires of conversion he had been accustomed to beg of God the grace of continency, but so as to be at the same time in some measure afraid of being heard too soon. "In the first dawning of my youth," says he, "I had begged of thee chastity, but by halves, miserable wretch that I am; and I said, 'Give me chastity and continency, but not yet awhile'; for I was afraid lest thou shouldst hear me too soon, and presently heal me of the disease of concupiscence, which I rather wished to have satiated than extinguished."<sup>1</sup> Now he began to be ashamed and grieved to find his will had been so weak and divided; and no sooner was Pontitianus departed but he applied himself to Alipius in these words: "What are we doing who thus suffer the unlearned to start up and seize heaven by force, whilst we with all our knowledge remain behind cowardly and heartless, and wallow still

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. viii. c. 7.

in the mire?" Alipius was astonished, not so much at his words as at his pathological manner of expressing them, and at the violent commotion in which he saw him labouring within his breast, and he followed him step by step into the garden.

They sat down at as great a distance as they could from the house, and there Austin groaned in bitter indignation against himself. We cannot better describe the tempest and furious agitation of his soul at that time than in his own words. "I now was enraged at myself," says he, "that I did not courageously at once resolve on what my reason convinced me to be so good and necessary to be done. I would, and I would not; I was, as it were, divided between myself and myself; I shook my chain with which I was fettered, but could not be released from it. Thou, O Lord, continuedst to press sore upon me in my interior, with a severe mercy, redoubling the stripes of fear and shame lest I should leave off struggling, and my chain should grow again and bind me faster than ever. I said within myself, 'Come, let it now be done; let it be done this moment.' Neither yet did I do it quite, demurring still a while, to die unto death, and live unto life. Trifles of trifles, and vanities, my old mistresses, hung about me, and pulling me by the garment of the flesh, softly whispered to me, 'Wilt thou then forsake us? From this moment shall we be no more with thee for ever? Wilt thou never hereafter taste those delights? From this moment shall this or that be no more allowed thee for ever?' Now I heard these suggestions not as boldly confronting me, and opposing me to my face, but as muttering behind me, and secretly pulling me that I should look back upon them; and they somewhat retarded me, whilst I delayed to snatch myself away and shake them off, and to spring forward whither I was called; and the violence of evil custom said to me, 'Dost thou think that thou canst live without these or those delights?' But the chaste dignity of continency enticed me to come forward, and, to encourage me to fear nothing, stretched forth to receive and embrace me her loving arms, full of crowds of good examples. There were great numbers of boys and girls, young men and maidens, grave widows and old women virgins, persons of all ages; and in all these continency was the fruitful mother of chaste delights from thee, O Lord, her heavenly bridegroom, and she laughed at me with a kind of derision by way of drawing me on, as if she had said, 'And are not thou able to do what these men and these maidens do? Or are these able in themselves, and not in the Lord their God? He gave me to them. Why standest thou upon thyself, and therefore dost not stand? Throw thyself upon him, and fear nothing. He will receive and will heal thee.'"

Austin was exceedingly ashamed that he should still hear the whispers of those fooleries; and the Holy Ghost, inviting him to chastity, seemed again to say to him, "Stop thine ears against those unclean monsters.

They tell thee of delights, but not as the law of the Lord thy God." This mighty tempest increasing every moment in his soul, when deep consideration had gathered together all his misery before his view, a very great shower of tears flowed from his eyes, and, conceiving solitude to be more fit for weeping, he withdrew from Alipius, who beheld him with amazement. He removed to a great distance from his friend that his presence might not disturb him, and he threw himself down under a fig-tree and there gave free vent to a torrent of tears. He cried out to God to this purpose, "How long, O Lord! wilt thou be angry for ever? Remember not my past iniquities." And perceiving himself still held back by them, he cast forth miserable complaints, and reproached himself, saying, "How long? how long? To-morrow, to-morrow! Why not now? Why does not this hour put an end to my filthiness?" These complaints he uttered, and he wept with most bitter contrition of heart, when on a sudden he heard, as it were, the voice of a child, from a neighbouring house, which singing, frequently repeated these two words in Latin, *Tolle Lege; Tolle Lege*: that is, "Take up, and read; take up, and read."<sup>1</sup> Presently his countenance being changed, he began to consider whether in any kind of play children were wont to sing any such words: nor could he call to mind that he had ever heard the like. Whereupon he rose up, suppressing the torrent of his tears, and he interpreted the voice to be nothing less than a divine admonition, remembering that St Antony was converted from the world to a life of retirement by hearing an oracle of the gospel read. Therefore he returned in haste to the place where Alipius was sitting, for he had left there the book of St Paul's epistles. He caught it up, opened it, and read in silence the following words, on which he first cast his eyes: "Not in revelling and drunkenness; not in chamberings and impurities; not in strifes and envy; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences."<sup>2</sup> He would read no further, nor was there need; for at the end of these lines, as it were, by a new gleam of confidence and security streaming into his heart, all the darkness of his former hesitation was dispelled. He shut the book, having put a mark upon the place, and with a calm and serene countenance told Alipius what had passed in his soul. Alipius desired to see the passage he had read, and found the next words to be: "He that is weak in faith, take unto you"; which he applied to himself. Being of virtuous inclinations and a sweet disposition, he readily joined his friend in his good resolution. They immediately went in, and told this good news to St Monica, who was transported with joy. She had followed her son into Italy, and came to him at Milan soon after he had abandoned the Manichean heresy and before he embraced the Catholic faith, for which happiness she continued still to pray, and

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. viii. c. 12.<sup>2</sup> Rom. xiii. 18.

for his perfect conversion from vice and irregularities till she saw both accomplished.

He formerly thought, under the tyranny of evil habits, "that without sensual pleasures life itself would seem to him no life but a pain."<sup>1</sup> And when he became a Catholic and first entertained thoughts of entering upon a virtuous course, he designed to take a wife, thinking it impossible for him otherwise to overcome the passion of lust. Alipius, who had never dragged the chain of that passion, wondered at his slavery; and from wondering was once in danger of desiring to make a trial, and to be drawn towards the same slavery; but the divine mercy preserved him. St Monica had provided a suitable match for her son, and the choice was extremely agreeable to him; but when his heart was entirely converted to God, he resolved to embrace a state of perfect continency, and found by experience the truth of that maxim of Seneca:<sup>2</sup> "It is not because things are difficult that we dare not aim at them; but they appear difficult because we have not courage to undertake them"; and that of two other heathens:<sup>3</sup> "Who sets about, hath half performed the deed." Our illustrious convert, pouring forth his heart in humble thanksgiving and holy jubilation before God, who had mercifully broken the chains of his slavery, cried out, "How sweet on a sudden was it become to me to be without the sweets of those toys! and what I was before so much afraid to lose, I now cast from me with joy; for thou hast expelled them from me who art the true and sovereign sweetness; thou expelledst them, and camest in thyself instead of them; sweeter than any pleasure whatever, but not to flesh and blood; brighter than any light whatever, but more interior than any secret; higher than any dignity whatever, but not to those that are high in their own conceit. Now was my mind free from the gnawing cares of the ambition of honour, of the acquisition of riches, and of weltering in pleasures; and my infant tongue began to lisp to thee, my Lord God, my true honour, my riches, and my salvation." In the process of this saint's wonderful conversion we cannot but admire the power of divine grace. Let the sinner take courage, this conflict will at length be converted into happy liberty and joy; but let no sinner attempt so great a work with faint endeavours.

"He that once sins, like him that slides on ice,  
Goes swiftly down the slippery ways of vice:  
Though conscience checks him, yet those rubs gone o'er,  
He slides on smoothly, and looks back no more."<sup>4</sup>

The conversion of St Austin happened in the year 386, the thirty-second of his age, in the month of August or September. At the same time he determined to quit his school and profession of teaching rhetoric; but

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. vi. c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Dicebant, terribili auctoritate separatâ, et mera et simplici ratione, eos qui se audire vellent, introducturos ad Deum, et errore omni liberaturos. St Aug. de Utilit. Credendi, c. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. de Manichée, lib. i. c. 8, t. i. p. 94.

<sup>4</sup> Dryden's Juvenal, Sat. 13.



deferred the execution of this resolution three weeks, till the vacation, which was in the time of the vintage. Then he retired to a country house at Cassiacum, near Milan, which his friend Verecundus (a professor of grammar in that city, who was then a heathen, but was baptized soon after) yielded to him and his friends; for he was accompanied in his retreat by his mother St Monica, his brother Navigius, his son Adeodatus, St Alipius, his chief confidant, Trigetius and Licentius, two of his scholars, and his cousins Lastidianus and Rusticus. Here he wholly employed himself in prayer and study, which exercises he made admirably conducive to each other; for his study was a kind of prayer by the devotion of his mind therein. Here he strenuously laboured, by the practice of austere penance, by the strictest watchfulness over his heart and senses, and by most fervent and humble prayer, to subdue his passions, to purify his affections, to disengage them perfectly from the inordinate love of creatures, and to prepare himself for the grace of leading a new life in Christ, and becoming in him a new creature. He wept over the wounds and spiritual miseries of his soul, and he cried out with the greatest earnestness to his Saviour, begging him to stretch forth his merciful and omnipotent hand and heal him. Against his domestic enemy he had recourse to God, praying: "My whole hope is in nothing else but in thy exceeding great mercy, O Lord, my God. Thou commandest my continency. Give me what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.<sup>1</sup> I know that no man can be continent unless God give it."<sup>2</sup> "Too late," said he, "have I loved thee, O beauty so ancient, and so new! too late have I loved thee. Thou wast with me, and I was not with thee. Thou hast called, thou hast cried out and hast pierced my deafness. Thou hast touched me, and I am all inflamed with the desire of thy embraces."<sup>3</sup> He loveth thee less, who loveth anything else with thee, which he loveth not for thee. O love, which always burnest, and art never extinguished; true charity! my God, set me all on fire."<sup>4</sup>

In the tenth book of his Confessions he mentions that he made it his principal care and study to watch against the snares of pride and vain-glory, which there is danger of a man's seeking in the very contempt of vainglory itself; he also laboured vigorously to restrain under the strictest government his tongue, his eyes, ears, and his other senses, especially that of the taste. Of this last he writes:<sup>5</sup> "Drunkenness is far from me: thou wilt grant in thy mercy that it never approach me; but gluttony sometimes steals upon thy servant: thou wilt have mercy that it may be removed from me. A soldier of the heavenly camp said, 'I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.'<sup>6</sup> Strengthen thou me, that I also may be able. I have heard another praying, 'Take thou

<sup>1</sup> St Aug. Conf. lib. x. c. 29.<sup>4</sup> Ib. c. 29.<sup>2</sup> Ib. viii.<sup>6</sup> Ib. lib. x. c. 31.<sup>3</sup> Conf. lib. x. c. 27.<sup>4</sup> Phil. iv.

from me the concupiscences of the belly.’<sup>1</sup> Who is he, O Lord, that is not sometimes carried a little out of the bounds of necessity? Whoever he be, he is great, let him magnify thy name; but I am not such a one, because I am a sinful man.” For this he earnestly implores the healing mercy of Christ. St Austin had contracted in the world a pernicious habit of swearing. After his conversion, exhorting others to refrain from that horrible crime, he set before them his own example, in what manner he had overcome an execrable habit of that vice. “We also were formerly engaged,” says he, “in that most base and criminal custom: we once swore; but from the time that we began to serve God, and understood the heinous evil of that sin, we were seized with vehement fear, and by fear we restrained that inveterate custom. You say you do it by habit; but above all things watch over yourselves that you may never swear. In another sermon he says, “I know it is difficult to break your habit; it is what I found myself; but by fearing God we broke our custom of swearing. When I read his law, I was struck with fear, I strove against my custom. I invoked God my helper, and he afforded me his succour not to swear. Now nothing is more easy to me than not to swear.”<sup>2</sup>

St Austin, in this retirement, usually after morning prayers, took a walk out with his friends, whilst St Monica took care of the housekeeping, though she had a great share in their domestic literary conferences. In them it was his main design to raise by degrees the thoughts of his friends in all their studies from sensible to spiritual things. St Austin testifies that the love of riches or honours seemed then quite extinguished in his breast: that he was never tempted to desire any food which he had interdicted himself, but feared intemperance sometimes in what he ate: that he was determined to shun above all things the company of women: nevertheless he still felt temptations to that shameful passion, to which he had been so long enslaved; but as often as they began to molest him, he was covered with extreme confusion at himself, shed abundance of tears, and cast himself earnestly into the arms of God, begging him to heal him.<sup>3</sup>

While he was employing himself in his solitude in the exercises of holy penance and prayer, God, as he tells us, “by his grace brought down the pride of his spirit, and laid low the lofty mountains of his vain thoughts, by bringing him daily to a greater sense of that misery and bondage from which he was delivered.” He read the psalms of David with wonderful devotion, and the words contained in them were like fiery darts, which first gave healthful wounds to his soul, and then communicated to it a divine sweetness and a healing virtue. By these affectionate words he was influenced with the divine love, and he burned with a desire of reciting them, if he could, all the world over, to abate the

<sup>1</sup> Ecclus. xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> St Aug. Serm. 307 (ol. 10, inter Paris), t. v. p. 1245.

<sup>3</sup> Conf. lib. xi. c. 4.

swelling pride of mankind. He was particularly affected with the fourth psalm, *Cum Invocarem*, of which he has given us a very pious paraphrase in his Confessions; and he could not but censure the Manichees as blind and miserable, who deprived themselves of the advantages of those divine hymns. Deplorable, in like manner, is the misfortune of those who repeat these moving acts of adoration, love, thanksgiving, and praise without the least attention to God, and who often have in their hearts sentiments quite opposite to those they have in their mouths: whose prayers are hypocrisy, whose promises to God are false and treacherous; whose affections are all pride and presumption, whilst in words they make protestations of humility and contrition. The divine maledictions against the lovers of vanity and iniquity which they recite fall upon their own heads: pretending to pray they rather mock God, because they have not the interior spirit of prayer. About this time he happened one day to be violently afflicted with the toothache, which hourly increased, and grew so insupportable that he was not able to speak; whereupon, by writing in wax, he desired his friends there present to join in prayer for him to the God of all manner of health, spiritual and corporeal. He knelt down to prayer with them; and as soon as they began to make their humble addresses to God, the pain wonderfully ceased. He was much amazed at this extraordinary manifestation of the divine power and goodness, and greatly confirmed in his hope that God, whose beck all things obey, and who is able at once to raise us from the deepest misery, would wash away the guilt of all his sins in the laver of baptism, in which he was shortly to be immersed.<sup>1</sup>

The time being come when St Austin was to enter his name among the Competentes, in order to prepare himself for baptism, he came to Milan in the beginning of Lent, in 387. He certainly was not behind-hand in fervour to St Alipius, who, as our saint tells us, disposed himself to receive this sacrament with extraordinary devotion, and subdued his body with great resolution, walking barefoot during winter, which is very cold in that part of Italy near the Alps, especially if we compare it to Africa.<sup>2</sup> St Austin was baptized by St Ambrose on Easter-eve, in 387, together with Alipius, and his son Adeodatus, who was about fifteen years of age.

Our saint had no sooner received the sacrament of regeneration but he found himself freed from all anxiety concerning his past life. Nor was he ever satiated with the wonderful sweetness he enjoyed in considering the depth of the divine counsels concerning the salvation of man. He was much moved, and wept exceedingly in hearing the psalms and sacred hymns sung in the churches,<sup>3</sup> and God sometimes admitted him into a very uncommon affection of devotion, and communicated to him much

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. ix. c. 4<sup>2</sup> Ib. lib. ix. c. 6.<sup>3</sup> Ib. c. 6 et 7; lib. x. c. 33.

interior spiritual sweetness.<sup>1</sup> He was at Milan when the relics of SS. Gervasius and Protasius were discovered, and was witness to certain miracles that were wrought on persons touching them.<sup>2</sup> Soon after this, desiring to devote himself entirely to the divine service in a life of solitude, he resolved to return into Africa. Accordingly he went, on his way thither, from Milan to Rome, together with his mother and several of his friends, where they continued from the month of April to the September following. Going thence to Ostia with an intention to embark there, he lost St Monica, who died in that seaport before the 13th of November, in 387.

Upon this accident Austin went back to Rome, and stayed there till the following year. He landed at Carthage about September in 388, and there lodged for some time in the house of a virtuous lawyer, named Innocent, and was witness to his miraculous cure of a dangerous fistula whilst the best surgeons of Carthage and Alexandria were preparing to perform a dangerous incision; a sinus which was deeper than the rest of the sore having escaped several operations which he had already undergone. The patient prayed with many tears that God would mercifully preserve him from this danger, and Saturninus, Bishop of Uzalis, Aurelius, who was afterwards Bishop of Carthage, and several other pious clergymen who often visited him during his illness, and were then present, falling on their knees, joined him in his devout prayer. St Austin was one of the company, and relates how, the physicians coming the next day, he that was to perform the operation took off the bandages, and to the astonishment of all who had seen the wound before, found it entirely healed, and covered with a very firm scar.<sup>3</sup> St Austin made a very short stay at Carthage, making all possible haste to retire to his house in the country, with certain devout friends. There he lived almost three years entirely disengaged from all temporal concerns, serving God in fasting, prayer, good works, meditating upon his law day and night, and instructing others by his discourses and books.<sup>4</sup> He settled his paternal estate on the church of Tagasté, only on condition that the bishop should furnish him a yearly stipend out of it for his and his son's maintenance among their religious brethren. All things were in common in their house, and were distributed according to everyone's necessities, no one among them having the least thing at his own disposal. St Austin reserved nothing which he could call his own, having alienated the very house in which he lived. The religious Order of the hermits of St Austin dates its foundation from this epoch, in 388.

St Austin instituted a nunnery of his Order after he was promoted to the episcopal dignity; and his sister, who renounced the world in her

<sup>1</sup> Conf. lib. x. c. 40.

<sup>2</sup> St Aug. de Civ. Dei. lib. xxii. c. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. lib. ix. c. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Possid. c. 3 et 5.

widowhood, was chosen the first abbess. After her death, Felicitas, the oldest amongst the nuns, was pitched upon to succeed her; but some demanding another person for their superior, a division happened among them, which St Austin stifled in its birth by two letters addressed to Felicitas, Rusticus (the priest who assisted the community), and all the nuns,<sup>1</sup> whom he strongly exhorted to union, perfect regularity, fasting, public prayer, strict religious poverty, and ready obedience to the abbess and to the priest. In the second letter<sup>2</sup> he laid down a regular body of monastic rules, which is adopted also by the men who regard him as the founder of their Orders, both the Hermits and the Regular Canons, though each have added to it many particular constitutions. That it was received also by other religious men soon after the death of St Austin appears by the rule of Tarnate, and by that of St Cæsarius, in both which it is inserted, and by a manuscript copy at Corbie, above a thousand years old. The holy founder lays down the strictest rules of poverty, obedience, and modesty; he orders that no one ever steadfastly fix her eyes upon another, even of the same sex, this being a mark of immodesty and impudence; and he will have this fault always severely chastised, though with more mildness when the person guilty is her own voluntary accuser. He recommends, above all things, perfect humility; "for," as he says, "pride lies in wait about our good works, to destroy them; and what does it avail to give our riches to the poor, and become poor ourselves, if the miserable soul becomes prouder by contemning wealth than she was before by possessing it?"

During the saint's retirement, his ingenious son Adeodatus, in the fervour of the sacrifice he had made of himself to God, passed to a better life. St Austin applied himself to pious meditation and the study of the sacred writings. Though in his youth, whilst his ears could only bear the Ciceronian purity and elegance of the Latin tongue, and his mind was captivated and led away by the world and error, he was alienated from reading the holy scriptures by a seeming meanness of the style; yet, when he began to be more conversant in them, and his judgment was riper, he confessed his mistake.

St Austin had enjoyed his solitude near Tagasté almost three years when a person of consideration and probity, one of the emperor's agents at Hippo Regius, a maritime town not far from Tagasté, desired very much to converse with him at leisure about the state of his soul. The saint carefully avoided going to any cities in which the sees were vacant, for fear of being chosen to the episcopal dignity; but there being then a bishop at Hippo, he went thither on this occasion without suspecting any danger. Valerius, bishop of that city, had mentioned to his people the necessity of ordaining a priest for the service of his church. One day,

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 210, 211.<sup>2</sup> Ep. olim 109, nunc. ed. Ben. 211.

when St Austin was come into the church, they laid hands on him, and presented him to Valerius, desiring, with great earnestness and loud cries, that he might be forthwith ordained priest. St Austin burst into tears, considering the great dangers that threatened him in that charge; but was obliged in the end to acquiesce, and was ordained priest about the end of the year 390. The disorders of his youth would have been a perpetual disqualification or irregularity had they happened after his baptism; but, from that time, he was become a new man, and was then more conspicuous for his piety than for his great learning. Our new priest being recovered from his surprise, employed his friends to beg of Valerius some respite, in order to prepare himself in solitude for the exercise of his charge. He made the same request himself, by an excellent letter, which tacitly condemns the presumption and rashness of those who, without a holy dread, intrude themselves into the ministry. He puts his bishop in mind that "There is nothing in the world more easy or agreeable than the office of a bishop, priest, or deacon if it be performed in a slight, careless, and complying manner; but nothing is more miserable in itself, or more criminal and unjust in the sight of God. On the other side, nothing in this life is more difficult, laborious, or dangerous than this office; but nothing more blessed in the sight of God if it be discharged in the manner our Great Leader commandeth." He says that though he was formerly persuaded of this truth, he now felt it much more than he had imagined at a distance, and he feared that the Lord had called him into a tempestuous sea to correct him, and to chastise his sins. "O my father Valerius," said he, "do you command me then to perish? Where is your charity? Do you love me? Do you love your church? I am sure you love both me and your church. Many things are wanting to me for the discharge of this employment, which are not to be attained, but as our Lord directs us, by asking, seeking, and knocking; that is, by praying, reading, and weeping." Valerius seems to have granted him this respite till the following Easter, for his first sermons coincide with that time. This prelate, who was a Grecian, and had, moreover, an impediment in speaking, appointed St Austin to preach to the people in his own presence, as was customary for bishops to do in the East, but, till that time, was unusual in the West. However, Valerius continued to preach sometimes himself. Austin desiring to live still in a monastery, Valerius gave him his own gardens, which were contiguous to the church, where the citizens built him a house for his monks. This is not to be confounded with the regular community of clerks which, after he was bishop, he established in his episcopal palace. Knowing that the instruction of the flock was the principal duty of the pastoral charge, he from that time never interrupted the course of his sermons till his death. We have near four hundred extant, though several were not wrote by him but copied

by others as he delivered them.<sup>1</sup> They are not regular orations, composed of all their parts; but familiar discourses, spoken without much preparation. In them he barely proposes the truth with agreeable expressions, and impresses it with some smart thoughts. This kind of eloquence is much inferior to that of the Greek fathers of the same age; but it agreed with the genius of his hearers, who received such discourses with great acclamations and applause, and were frequently moved by them to tears.<sup>2</sup>

St Austin perfectly understood all the essential rules of eloquence. Instructing sacred orators, he tells us<sup>3</sup> that a discourse must be simple and natural; that art must not appear in it, and that, if it be too fine and elaborate, it puts the hearers upon their guard. He speaks very well of the necessity of being plain and familiar, though everything that is said should have a suitable dignity, especially when religion is the subject. He distinguishes three kinds of speaking: *submissively*, in an humble, familiar way; *mildly*, in an engaging, soft, insinuating manner, to make people love the truth; and *nobly*, in a lofty, vehement strain, when we would captivate men and rescue them from the dominion of their passions. This sublime kind he would have rather full of the most pathetic emotions than florid or adorned with embellishments of speech. But a speaker who follows the impulse of his thoughts studies no beauties of elocution, though he naturally uses such as rise from the subject itself. Though the Latin tongue, in his age, was not of the Augustan standard, all impartial judges must allow that he had a great talent for persuasion. He writes with infinite penetration, is full of noble notions and sentiments, and expresses himself in a pathetic insinuating manner. He knew the heart of man entirely well, and reasoned generally with great force.

St Austin fell into allegorical interpretations by example, and for the opportunity of introducing such moral instructions as he judged most necessary for his people. As for certain fashionable defects of eloquence in his time, this great man was sensible of them; but, having higher views than the common rules of rhetoric, he conformed himself to the prevailing taste of the age he lived in, that he might the better insinuate the truths of religion into the minds of the people by engaging them to hear the word of God with pleasure; and, in his discourses, though popular, he is always sublime. Fenelon mentions two instances to show the wonderful influence which his pathetic eloquence had upon the minds of the people; an influence which appears more wonderful than Cicero's victory over the determined resolution and indignation of Cæsar, and which the most florid discourses would never have had how much soever they had pleased the ears and excited the applause and admiration of his

<sup>1</sup> See possid. c. 7, 9, 31; Ceillier, t. xi. p. 425.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. iv. de Doctr. Christ. c. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. ii. de Doctr. Christ.

audience. The first is related by the saint himself in a letter to his friend Alipius. The custom of celebrating the Agapæ, or love-feasts, in the churches themselves, or in the cemeteries, upon the graves of the martyrs or others, and this often with intemperance, was an abuse which St Austin, by a strenuous letter, exhorted Aurelius, Archbishop of Carthage, to procure to be extirpated by an order of a council.<sup>1</sup> The people at Hippo would not be restrained from these riotous rejoicings on festivals, which they pretended to justify by the authority of their ancestors. St Austin, who was then priest at Hippo, read to them the most vehement threats and reproaches of the prophets. Then he earnestly besought his hearers, by the ignominies and sorrows, by the cross, by the blood of Christ, not to destroy themselves; to have pity on him who spoke to them with so much affection, and to show some regard to their venerable old bishop, who, out of tenderness for them, had commanded him to instruct them in the truth. "I did not make them weep," says he, "by first weeping over them; but, while I preached, their tears prevented mine. I own that then I could not restrain myself. After we had wept together, I began to entertain great hopes of their amendment."<sup>2</sup> He had the satisfaction of seeing his people reformed from that very day. The other example is still more remarkable, and the account of it we have also from the saint.<sup>3</sup> It was a barbarous custom at Cæsarea, in Mauritania (now called Tenez, a town subject to the dey of Algiers), for relations, brothers, fathers, and sons, being divided into two parties, to fight publicly with throwing stones at one another, for several days, at a certain time of the year. This combat was a spectacle with which the people were extremely delighted, and to draw them from it was judged a very difficult enterprise. "According to the utmost of my abilities," says St Austin, "I used the most pathetic expressions to extirpate such a cruel inveterate custom from their minds and manners. I thought I had done nothing, while I only heard their acclamations, and raised their delight and admiration. They were not persuaded, so long as they could amuse themselves with giving applause to the discourse which they heard. But their tears gave me some hopes, and declared that their minds were changed. When I saw them weep, I believed this horrible custom would be abolished. It is now eight years ago and upwards, and, by the grace of God, they have been restrained from attempting any such practice."

In the sermons which fill the fifth tome of his works, this father inculcates chiefly assiduous meditation on the last things; for "if the Lord's day (or last judgment) may be at some distance, is thy day (or death) afar off." He enforces the necessity of doing penance; "For sin must be punished either by the penitent sinner or by God, his avenging

<sup>1</sup> St Aug. Ep. 22, ol. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. Ep. 29, ad Alip. t. ii. p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. iv. de Doctr. Christ. c. 24.



judge; and God, who has promised pardon to the penitent sinner, has nowhere promised him who delays his conversion a to-morrow to do penance in." He frequently speaks of the obligation and advantages of alms-deeds, and takes notice that the neglect of this precept is the cause of the damnation of the greatest number that perish, seeing Christ mentions only this crime in the sentence both of the elect and the reprobate at the last day. He often mentions purgatory, and strongly recommends prayer and sacrifices for the repose of the faithful departed. He speaks of holy images of St Stephen, of Christ, and SS. Peter and Paul, of Abraham sacrificing his son; also of the respect due to the sign of the cross. He relates miracles wrought by it and by the relics of martyrs. He often speaks of the honour due to the martyrs, as in most of his sixty-nine sermons on the Saints, but he remarks that we build altars and offer sacrifices to God alone, not to any martyrs.

St Austin preached constantly, sometimes every day, and sometimes twice on the same day. He did not desist even when he was so weak as to be scarce able to speak; but he seemed to gather strength in preaching, and his ardour for the salvation of souls made him forget the pains of sickness. Wherever he went, even in the dioceses of other bishops, he was constantly required to feed the people with the bread of life, and was always heard with great eagerness; his sermons were received with universal applause and, according to the custom of that age, with clappings and acclamations; but what alone gave him pleasure was the wonderful fruit which they never failed to produce. Possidius mentions, among other instances of extraordinary conversions, that the holy doctor, by making a sudden digression from his subject to speak against the Manichæan heresy, upon one Firmus, a famous rich and zealous patron of that sect coming into the church, he gained him upon the spot to Christ. After the sermon, Firmus came and cast himself at the saint's feet, and, bathed in tears, confessed his errors. He was afterwards advanced to the priesthood.

Valerius, finding himself sinking under the weight of his years and infirmities, and fearing lest his church should be deprived of Austin by some other city demanding him for their bishop, procured privately the consent of St Aurelius, Archbishop of Carthage, and the neighbouring prelates of his province of Numidia, to make him his coadjutor in the bishopric. St Austin strenuously opposed the project, but was compelled to acquiesce in the will of heaven, and was consecrated in December 395, having in November entered into the forty-second year of his age. Valerius died the year following.

St Austin in this new dignity was obliged to live in the episcopal house, both on account of hospitality and for the exercise of his functions. But he engaged all the priests, deacons, and sub-deacons that lived with him to renounce all property and to engage themselves to embrace the

rule he established there; nor did he admit any to holy orders who did not bind themselves to the same manner of life. Herein he was imitated by several other bishops, and this was the original of Regular Canons, in imitation of the apostles. Possidius tells us that the saint's clothes and furniture were modest, but decent—not slovenly. No silver was used in his house except spoons. His dishes were of earth, wood, or marble. He exercised hospitality, but his table was frugal; besides herbs and pulse, some flesh was served up for strangers and the sick; nor was wine wanting, but a quantity was regulated, which no guest was ever allowed to exceed. At table he loved rather reading or literary conferences than secular conversation, and, to warn his guests to shun detraction, he had the following distich written upon his table:

“This board allows no vile detractor place,  
Whose tongue shall charge the absent with disgrace.”

If any fell into that vice in his presence, he warned them of it, without distinction of persons, and to show his dislike, suddenly rose and withdrew into his chamber, as Possidius had seen him frequently do. All his clerks who lived with him ate at the same table, and were clothed out of the common stock with himself. He suffered no woman ever to converse in his house, not even his sister (who was superior of a nunnery), nor his two nieces, who served God with her. He said that though no sinister suspicion could arise from the conversation of a sister or niece, yet they would be sometimes attended or visited by others of their sex. He never would speak to any woman without having some of his clerks by, and being in sight of them, though the business were never so secret. He committed to overseers among his clergy the entire care of his temporals, and took their accounts at the end of the year. To shun whatever might distract his mind, he entrusted to the management of others the building of the hospitals or churches which he erected. He never would receive for the poor any estates or presents which he was importuned to accept when the donation seemed a prejudice to an heir or a disinherison of a child. Nor could any age afford a greater example of perfect disinterestedness. He was aware how easily avarice creeps unperceived into the heart and like a moth devours the best actions, no less than vanity, if it taints them with its venomous blast; and he was continually upon his guard against himself lest either of these contagious evils should infect his soul and secretly entangle his affections. He employed whatever could be spared of the revenues of his church in relieving the poor, as he had before given his own patrimony for their relief. Possidius says that he sometimes melted down part of the sacred vessels to redeem captives; in which he was authorized by the example of St Ambrose. In several of his letters and sermons, mention is made of the custom he had prevailed upon his flock to establish, of clothing all the poor of each

parish once a year. He was not afraid sometimes to contract considerable debts to procure comfort and subsistence for the distressed. But his zeal and charity for the spiritual welfare of others seemed to have no bounds. "I desire not to be saved without you," said he to his people,<sup>1</sup> like another Moses or St Paul. "What shall I desire? what shall I say? why am I a bishop? why am I in the world, only to live in Jesus Christ? but to live in him with you. This is my passion, my honour, my glory, my joy, and riches."

There perhaps never was a man endowed by nature with a more affectionate and friendly soul than the great St Austin; but his tender and benevolent disposition was exceedingly heightened and improved by the nobler supernatural motive and most powerful influence of holy charity and religion; of which his letters and the sequel of the history of his life will furnish many examples. He conversed freely with infidels, and often invited them to his table;<sup>2</sup> but generally refused to eat with Christians whose conduct was publicly scandalous and disorderly, and was severe in subjecting their crimes to canonical penance and to the censures of the church.<sup>3</sup> He never wanted courage to oppose iniquity without respect of persons, though he never forgot the rules of charity, meekness, and good breeding; witness the manner in which he reproved one Romulus for the oppression of his poor vassals,<sup>4</sup> and others. He complains that some sins were by custom become so common that, though he condemned them, he durst not oppose the torrent too violently for fear of doing much harm and no good should he attempt to extirpate them by excommunication; yet he trembled lest he should be rendered culpable by remissness. Whereupon he cried out, "Woe to the sins of men who only fear those crimes that are rare! But as to those that are common, though so grievous that they shut the gates of heaven, through the force of custom we are constrained to tolerate them, and by tolerating fear we may ourselves become guilty. May it please thy mercy, O Lord, that we may not be condemned as not having done all that might be done to hinder them."<sup>5</sup> Prayer and advice were the means by which he sought direction in such difficulties. Erasmus,<sup>6</sup> considering his immense labours and indefatigable zeal for the salvation of souls, says of him, "In the epistles and other writings of this holy man, how manifestly do his piety, charity, meekness, gentleness, kindness, love of concord, and zeal for the house of God appear! What doth he not endeavour! How doth he labour! How doth he turn and change himself into all shapes! If there appear the least hopes of drawing one pagan to Christ, or one heretic to the church, how doth he condescend, how doth he, as St Paul saith, 'change his voice'! How anxiously doth he intercede for those wicked

<sup>1</sup> Serm. 17, c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Serm. 392, c. 5. In Ps. lxi. n. 28, &c.

<sup>3</sup> In Galat. t. iii. part 2, p. 386.

<sup>4</sup> In Ps. c. n. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Ep. 211, p. 321.

<sup>6</sup> Pref. in epist. St Aug.

Circumcellions who deserved more than one death! Who ever solicited more for his friends than he doth for his enemies? With what pangs doth he bring forth all to Christ! How diligently doth he endeavour to save all, and lose none! How grievously is he afflicted when any scandal ariseth! Methinks I see the hen in the gospel, solicitous and anxious to gather and cherish her chickens under her wings. In him alone, as in a mirror, may be seen a perfect bishop, such a one as St Paul describeth." Causes being at that time often carried by appeal from the secular courts to the bishops, St Austin was obliged sometimes to hear them the whole day fasting, which he did diligently, affectionately, and patiently, making use of every means to reconcile the parties amicably, and, whether they were Christians or infidels, to draw them to God; but he complained of the distraction of this charge, which only charity made supportable to him. He scarce ever made any other visits than to orphans, widows, the sick, and other distressed persons. He practised the three maxims of St Ambrose: first, never to make matches for any persons, lest they should prove unhappy; secondly, never to persuade any to be soldiers; and thirdly, never to go to feasts in his own city, lest they should become frequent, and he should be drawn into intemperance and much loss of his precious time.<sup>1</sup>

The epistles of great men are generally interesting and curious, both for illustrating their history and giving the genuine portraiture of their mind. Those of St Austin are particularly so, not only on these accounts, but also for the importance of the subjects treated in them. Several are so many excellent and learned treatises, and contain many admirable instructions for the practice of perfect virtue. In them he mentions his own frequent indispositions and the habitual weakness of his constitution. In the thirty-eighth to Profuturus (n. 397), he says he was confined to his bed under violent pain, but adds, "Though I suffer, yet I am well, because I am as God would have me to be; for when we will not what he wills, it is we that are in the fault, as he can neither do nor permit anything but what is just."

In his fifty-fifth epistle, to Januarius, he speaks of Lent and of other laws of the church; but says that certain rites and customs may be sometimes practised by particulars which are only tolerated by the church and may be sometimes such as are better rejected than observed. It would be tedious to mention all the important points of faith and discipline which he discusses in many of his epistles; but devout persons will find nothing more agreeable than the perfect maxims of Christian virtue which he inculcates. With what charity and tenderness does he comfort Crysius under temporal losses and calamities, putting him in mind that God is our only good, and a good which can never fail us if we study truly

<sup>1</sup> Possid. c. 27.

to belong to him. If he suffers us to be afflicted in this world, it is only for our greater advantage.<sup>1</sup> He explains the duties of a wife towards her husband in his letter to Ecdicia,<sup>2</sup> showing her that she was obliged to condescend and conform herself to the humour of her morose husband, not only in duties which she essentially owed him but also in things indifferent; that she ought not to wear black clothes, seeing this gave him offence; and she might be humble in mind in rich and gay dress (provided it were modest and not such as the apostle condemns) if he should insist upon her wearing such. He tells her she ought, in all things reasonable, to agree with her husband as to the manner of educating their son and rather leave to him the chief care of it, when he required it. He severely chides her for having given goods and money to the poor without his tacit consent, and obliges her to ask his pardon for it, whether his unwillingness to allow her *extraordinary* charities proceeded from a just and prudent care to provide for their son or from any imperfect motive. He exhorts her to gain him by meekness and charity, and to endeavour by all means to reclaim him from his adulteries and other vices, especially by praying for him. "Pray for him," says the saint, "and from the bottom of your heart. For tears are, as it were, the blood of a heart pierced with grief," &c. In like manner did he press upon husbands the respect, tender affection, and just condescension which they owe to their wives; and so with regard to other states.

We have a remarkable instance of St Austin's meekness and humility in his controversy with St Jerom. The latter in his exposition of the epistle of St Paul to the Galatians had explained the passage of his withdrawing and blaming St Peter for withdrawing himself from the table of the Gentiles upon the arrival of the Jewish converts<sup>3</sup> as if this had been a mere collusion between the apostles to prevent the scandal of either party, and as if St Paul did not think St Peter in any fault; because he allowed the observance of such legal ceremonies at that time no less than St Peter did. St Austin, in 395, being only priest, wrote to him against this exposition,<sup>4</sup> showing that though the apostles certainly agreed in doctrine, yet in this action of St Peter there was an indiscretion of inadvertence which gave to the Gentile converts an occasion of scandal; and that if St Paul did not blame him seriously he must have been guilty of an officious lie (which cannot be denied), and by admitting such a fallacy any passage in the scripture may be eluded in the like manner. This letter of St Austin happened, by the detention and death of the bearer, never to be delivered. In 397 St Austin, being then bishop, wrote to St Jerom another letter upon the same subject,<sup>5</sup> which, by another accident, fell into the hands of several persons in Italy and was only sent to St Jerom in Palestine

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 244, ol. 83.<sup>2</sup> Ep. 28, ol. 1.<sup>3</sup> Ep. 262, ol. 199.<sup>4</sup> St Aug. Ep. 40, ol. 9.<sup>5</sup> Gal. ii. 11.

accidentally by one of them; at which St Jerom took offence. Several other letters passed between them on this affair,<sup>1</sup> in which St Austin shows that the apostles tolerated for some time the ceremonies of the Jewish law, that they might be abrogated by insensible degrees and the synagogue buried with honour. He conjures St Jerom by the meekness of Christ to pardon him what he had offended him in, thankfully submits himself to his reprehension and reproof, professing himself always ready to be taught by him as his master and corrected by him as his censor, and desires to drop the inquiry if it caused any breach of friendship, that they might provide for their mutual salvation.<sup>2</sup> "I entreat you again and again," says he in another letter, "to correct me confidently when you perceive me to stand in need of it; for, though the office of a bishop be greater than that of a priest, yet in many things is Austin inferior to Jerom."<sup>3</sup>

The saint imputes the whole blame of this dispute to himself and his own negligence, because he had not added that the toleration of the legal rites only belonged to that time when the New Law began to be promulgated.<sup>4</sup> St Jerom afterwards tacitly came over to St Austin's opinion,<sup>5</sup> which is confirmed by the general suffrage of theologians. St Austin grieved exceedingly to see the debate betwixt him and Ruffinus carried on with warmth, and conjured them with the greatest tenderness imaginable to forbear invectives. "Could I meet you both together in any place," said he, "I would fall down at your feet, I would weep as long as I were able, I would beseech as much as I love you, sometimes each for himself, then each one for the other and for many others, especially the weak for whom Christ died."<sup>6</sup> This saint always dreaded the itch of vainglory in literary contests, in which men love an opinion, as he says, "Not because it is true, but because it is their own, and they dispute, not for the truth, but for the victory." For his part, he was so much upon his guard to shun this rock that charity and humility were nowhere more visibly the governing principles of his heart than on such occasions.

He trembled always at the danger of secret complacency or vainglory amidst the praises of others. Thus he writes<sup>7</sup> of this temptation in his Confessions: "We are daily assaulted, O Lord, with these temptations: we are tempted without ceasing. The tongues of men are as a furnace in which we are daily tried. Thou knowest the groans of my heart to Thee concerning this thing, and the floods of my eyes. For I cannot easily discover the advances that I make towards being more clean from this plague; and I very much dread my hidden sins, which are seen by thine eyes but not by mine. In other temptations I have some way by which I may try myself; but none at all in this." He complains, in a letter to Aurelius, Archbishop of Carthage, much more bitterly how subtly

<sup>1</sup> See St Aug. Ep. 71-75, St. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 82, ol. 19, inter op. St Hier. Ep. 97.

<sup>3</sup> St Hier. lib. i. contr. Pelag. c. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Ep. 73, ol. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 73, ol. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ib.

<sup>7</sup> Conf. lib. x. c. 37.

and imperceptibly this dangerous vice insinuates itself into our souls, adding, "This I write to discover my evils to you, that you may know in what things to pray to God for my infirmities."

From this sincere humility St Austin wrote his *Confessions*, or praises of the divine mercy and justice, about the year 397, not long after he was made bishop, when all the world admired his sanctity and he enjoyed the greatest honour and fame. Possidius assures us that his main design in composing this work was to study his own humiliation, and to endeavour that no one should think of him above that which he confessed himself to be. He therefore divulged all the sins of his youth in the nine first books, and in the tenth published the many imperfections to which he was still subject, humbly begging the intercession of all Christians in his behalf. The saint himself, sending this book to Count Darius, tells him<sup>1</sup> that "The caresses of this world are more dangerous than its persecutions. See what I am from this book: believe me who bear testimony of myself, and regard not what others say of me. Praise with me the goodness of God for the great mercy he hath shown in me, and pray for me that he will be pleased to finish what he hath begun in me and that he never suffer me to destroy myself." St Austin says in the second book of his *Retractions* that he compiled this work also to excite both himself and other men to praise God, ever just and ever good, and to raise up our understanding and affections to Him. He has interspersed in it sublime and solid reflections on the greatness and goodness of God, the vanity of the world, and the miseries of sin, with most useful instructions for furthering the spiritual life in our souls. Ever since this work has been writ, it has been always read by pious persons with delight and admiration. The saint having given an account of his own actions in the ten first books, in the three last takes occasion to speak of his love for the holy scriptures, and discusses several metaphysical difficulties concerning time and the creation of the world, or the first part of the history of Genesis, against the Manichees.

Those heretics were the first against whom he exerted his zeal after his conversion from that impious sect. When he was made priest at Hippo, he grieved to see that great numbers in that city were infected with this pestilential heresy, and he challenged Fortunatus, their priest, to a conference. This was accepted, and it lasted two days; the dispute turned principally on the origin of evil, which St Austin proved to be derived from the free will of the creature; which article of free will he demonstrates, because without it neither law nor punishment could be just.

In 404 a Manichee, of the number of the Elect, called Felix, came to Hippo in order to re-establish his sect in that city and country, which by the zeal of St Austin seemed no longer able to raise its head. He had been at Hippo from the month of August, when he agreed to hold a public

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 231, p. 6.

disputation with St Austin in the church in December. The conference of the first day is lost; but those of the second and third, held on the 7th and 12th of December, are extant. Felix was not so learned as Fortunatus, whom St Austin had formerly confuted, as Erasmus observes, but he had more cunning. The issue of this disputation was that Felix closed it by publicly professing upon the spot the Catholic faith and anathematizing Manes and his blasphemies.

The heresy of the Priscillianists was akin to some of the Manichean principles, and at that time infected several parts of Spain, where also the errors of the Origenists prevailed among some. Paul Orosius, a Spanish priest, made a voyage into Africa, in 415, to see St Austin, whose great reputation had reached the most remote countries where the Christian name was known. This learned priest informed him, by a memorial, in what these heresies consisted, and requested of him an antidote to preserve the minds of his countrymen against them. This gave occasion to the saint's work, *Against the Priscillianists and Origenists*, in which he condemns the impious errors of those who taught the human soul to be of a divine nature, and sent into the body in punishment of former transgressions till it be purified in this world; and he proves that it is created by God, and that the torments of the devils and damned men are eternal. Possidius relates that Pascentius, count of the emperor's household, that is, intendant or steward of the imperial demesnes in Africa, being an Arian, insulted the Catholics on account of the simplicity of their faith, and challenged St Austin to a conference. When they met he refused to suffer notaries to take it down in writing; upon which St Austin foretold that everyone would give an account of it according to his fancy. Pascentius insisted upon St Austin's showing him the word "consubstantial" in scripture; the holy bishop asked him to show in it the term "not-begotten," which he used; and our holy doctor demonstrated that it suffices if the sense be found there in equivalent terms. Maximinus, an Arian bishop, accompanied Count Sigisvult, who commanded the Gothic troops for Valentinian against Count Boniface in Africa, and at Hippo challenged St Austin to a public disputation, which was held in 428 and taken down in writing, as it is now extant.

The Pagans and the Jews were no small object of our saint's zeal. The latter he confuted by a treatise, in which he shows the Mosaic law was to have an end and to be changed into the new law. The neighbouring city of Madaura was full of idolaters. St Austin gained their goodwill by rendering them some important public service and doing them good offices. Their grateful disposition towards him he improved to their spiritual advantage and induced them to embrace the faith of Christ,<sup>1</sup> having obliged Longinian, their pontiff, to confess that we must adore one only God, the

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 232.



incomprehensible Creator of all things and our sovereign good.<sup>1</sup> When Rome was plundered by Alaric the Goth, in 410, the Pagans renewed their blasphemies against the Christian religion, to which they imputed the calamities of the empire. To answer their slanders St Austin began his great work, *Of the City of God*, in 413, though he only finished it in 426. Several Tertullianists still subsisted at Carthage, whom St Austin, by his mildness and zeal, reunited to the Catholic Church, as he also did another sect called, from Abel the patriarch, Abelonians. Jovinian, the enemy of virginity consecrated to God, had been condemned by Pope Siricius and the council of Milan, and confuted by St Jerom in 392; nevertheless, his disciples secretly gave out that those who opposed him condemned the state of marriage. St Austin confuted this slander by his book, *On the Advantage of Matrimony*,<sup>2</sup> in which he shows that state to be holy, that many are engaged in it upon motives of virtue, and that several in that state surpass many virgins in sanctity. He published, about the same time, his book *On Holy Virginity*, against the error of that heresiarch, proving this state to be in itself the more perfect if it be embraced for the sake of God, and if it be accompanied with humility and according to its obligation, with a most fervent consecration of the heart to the love of God. His treatise, *On Continency*, was writ a little before he was bishop, to show that this virtue consists in subduing the passions, and that sins do not proceed from a principle that is evil by nature in us, as the Manichees pretended. In the two books, *On Adulterous Marriages*, the saint shows that a married person, after a separation on account of adultery, cannot take another wife or husband, and resolves some other difficulties concerning the indissolubility of marriage. His treatise, *On the Advantage of Widowhood*, was written in 414, and addressed to Juliana, the daughter-in-law of Proba. The saint commends very much the state of holy widowhood, though he allows second and third marriages lawful, and gives her and her daughter Demetrias, who had embraced a state of virginity the preceding year, useful instructions.

The sect which then made most noise in Africa and gave the greatest employment to the zeal of this saint was that of the Donatists. It has been related in the life of St Optatus in what manner it took its rise in 305, above forty years before the birth of St Austin. The first authors of it were condemned as schismatics by Pope Melchiades in a council at Rome in 313, and by the great council of all the West at Arles in 314. Having, in the beginning, violated the unity of the church, they by a usual consequence in all inveterate schisms, as St Austin observes, fell afterwards into several errors, by defending which they became heretics. Their first heresy was, that the Catholic Church spread over the world, by holding communion with sinners, was defiled, and had ceased to be

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 234.<sup>2</sup> T. vi. p. 300.

the Church of Christ, this being confined within the limits of their sect. Their second error was, that no sacraments can be validly conferred by those that are not in the true church. Whence they rebaptized all other sectaries and all Catholics that came over to them. Constantine the Great passed severe laws against them at Milan in 316, and banished some of their ringleaders.

The Donatists were exceeding numerous in Africa, and obstinate to a degree of madness. They reckoned above five hundred bishops of their sect.

By the learning and indefatigable zeal of St Austin, supported by the sanctity of his life, the Catholics began to gain ground exceedingly; at which the Donatists were so much exasperated that some enthusiasts among them preached publicly that to kill him would be doing a thing of the greatest service to their religion and highly meritorious before God; and troops of Circumcellions made several attempts to do it when he made the visitation of his diocese. One day he only escaped them by his guide having missed his way; for which preservation he gave public thanks to God.<sup>1</sup> The saint was obliged in 405 to solicit Cecilian, vicar of Africa, in Numidia, to restrain the Donatists about Hippo from the outrages which they perpetrated there.<sup>2</sup> In the same year the Emperor Honorius published new severe laws against them, condemning them to heavy fines and other penalties. St Austin at first disapproved such a persecution, though he afterwards changed his opinion when he saw the sincere conversion of many who, being moved by the terror of these laws, had by examining the truth opened their eyes to discover and heartily embrace it; and by the exemplarity of their lives and the fervour with which they gave thanks to God for their conversion, exceedingly edified the church.<sup>3</sup>

The most celebrated transaction that passed in Africa at that time between the Catholics and the Donatists was a great conference held at Carthage. St Austin had, by frequent challenges, invited Proculian, the Donatist, Bishop of Hippo, and others of that sect to a fair disputation before competent judges upon the controverted points; but this they constantly declined, alleging his superior eloquence. St Aurelius of Carthage, St Austin, and the rest of the Catholic prelates, in a national council of all Africa held at Carthage in 403, agreed to send to all the Donatist bishops in Africa a solemn challenge for deputies of both parties to meet at an appointed time and place, in order to discuss the articles which divided them in communion; but the Donatists answered they could not meet to confer with the successors of traditors and sinners, whose company would defile them; and their evasions put by the disputation till, at the request of the Catholics, the Emperor Honorius compelled them by a rescript,

<sup>1</sup> Enchir. c. 17.

<sup>2</sup> St Aug. Ep. 86, p. 208, t. ii.

<sup>3</sup> Ep. 185, ad Bonifac. an. 417, and Ep. 93. ad Vincent. Regatistam, an 408, p. 230.

dated in 410, to meet within four months and hold a conference with the Catholics, in which he appointed the tribune, Marcellinus, to preside. The Catholic bishops subscribed to this agreement at Carthage to the number of 270. Marcellinus ordered seven bishops to be chosen on each side for the disputants, and four notaries on each side to take down the acts in writing, with four bishops to superintend and observe them, and seven other bishops for the council of the disputants; only these eighteen on each side were to be present. However, the Donatists, at their request, were all allowed to appear at the beginning of the conferences, but no more than eighteen Catholic bishops, the rest spending this time in retirement, prayer, fasting, and almsdeeds, to implore the divine blessing. The questions both of right and of matters of fact were debated; the very pieces produced by the Donatists justified Cecilian and his cause; and the universality of the true church was demonstrated by St Austin, who had the principal share in this disputation and bore away the glory of that triumphant day, the fruit of which was the conversion of an incredible number of heretics. Marcellinus pronounced sentence as to the matters of fact which had given rise to the schism, declaring that Cecilianus had never been convicted of the crimes laid to his charge, and that had he been guilty, they could not have affected the universal church; for no one is to be condemned for faults committed by another. The report of all that had passed having been made by Marcellinus to the Emperor Honorius, to whom the Donatists had appealed from this sentence, he enacted new laws against them, subjecting them to heavy fines, and ordering their clergy to be banished out of Africa and their churches restored to the Catholics.

This conference gave a mortal blow to the schisms of the Donatists, who from that time returned in crowds into the bosom of the Catholic Church, many bishops being converted with their whole flocks, as Possidius relates. Their bishops that renounced the schism were confirmed in their dignities, as had been decreed in the council of Carthage in 407; yet some of these heretics remained immovably fixed in their errors and faction. Several of their circumcellions and clerks having lain in ambush near Hippo, had killed Restitutus, a Catholic priest, and had beat out the eyes and broke one of the fingers of another; and being apprehended, they confessed their crime before Marcellinus, whom the emperor had then honoured with the dignity and office of count. St Austin, fearing they would be punished according to the rigour of the law, wrote to Marcellinus, entreating him not to use that severity towards them which they had employed against Catholics. "We neither impeached them," said he, "nor persecuted them, and should be sorry to have the sufferings of the servants of God punished by the law of retaliation."<sup>1</sup> The Donatists failed not to bring Marcellinus and Apringius into suspicion, as if they had favoured the rebels; and at

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 133, ad Marcellin.

their instigation, Marinus caused them to be imprisoned, and though St Austin went to Carthage, justified them before Marinus and obtained his promise that they should not suffer, that general afterwards, on a sudden, commanded them both to be beheaded. St Austin was much afflicted at this barbarous execution, and ascribed the death of Marcellinus to the slanders of the Donatists, who were exasperated at the sentence he had given against them; he has left us a *moving description of the patience and heroic sentiments of charity, and all other Christian virtues, in which he found him in prison when he went to comfort and assist him before his death, and bore ample testimony to his innocence, inviolable chastity, integrity, patience, contempt of all earthly things, holy zeal, and charity.* He mentions that, visiting Marcellinus in prison and asking him whether he had ever offended God by impurity or committed any other sin for which he ought to do canonical penance, he, taking hold of the bishop's right hand, assured him "by those sacraments which that hand brought him, that he had never been guilty of any such sin."<sup>1</sup> This passage shows, as Du Pin observes (p. 153), how careful the pastors then were to visit prisoners, and, when they seemed to be in danger of being condemned, to prepare them for death by penance, absolution, and the holy eucharist. St Austin rejected all commerce with Marinus, and exhorted others to testify their indignation against him in such a manner as might oblige him to a penance proportionable to his crime. The Emperor Honorius disgraced Marinus for this action, honoured Marcellinus as one who had been unjustly put to death through the malice of the Donatists, and styled him "of glorious memory."<sup>2</sup> In the Martyrologies he is ranked among the martyrs on the 8th of April.

About the same time St Demetrias consecrated her virginity to God in a religious state at Carthage in 413. She was daughter of Olibrius, who had been consul in 395, and of Juliana, and grand-daughter, by the father, of Proba. In the midst of the delights of a great house, and surrounded with eunuchs and maids who served her, she had from her tender years inured herself to austere fasting, mean clothing, and lying often on the ground covered only with sackcloth. This she did so secretly that only a few of her maids were conscious of it and most of her pious practices. It was her desire to devote herself to God in a religious state; and she besought her Saviour, with many tears, on her knees, to grant her this happiness, and to move the hearts of her mother and grandmother to consent to the same. An honourable marriage with a rich Roman nobleman was agreed to by her friends, and the nuptial chamber was preparing when she, one morning, encouraging herself by the example of St Agnes, clothed in an ordinary tunic and gown, having laid aside her ornaments

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 151, ol. 159, t. ii. p. 517; Oros. lib. ii. c. 42; Pros. et Marcell. in Chron. St Hieron. lib. iii. contr. Pelag.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. tit. 5, lib. iv.

and jewels, went and threw herself at the feet of her grandmother Proba, but could express herself only by her tears. Proba and Juliana were extremely surprised; but when they understood her request they raised her up, and pressing her tenderly in their arms, with great joy approved her pious resolution. They did not lessen her fortune, but bestowed that portion on the poor which they had designed for her husband. Demetrias received the veil from the hands of the Bishop of Carthage with the usual prayers and ceremonies.<sup>1</sup> Several of her friends and slaves followed her example. St Austin's exhortations, whilst he was at Carthage during the conference, had very much contributed to confirm her in her good resolutions, and Proba and Juliana both wrote to acquaint him of her being professed, sending him at the same time a small present. St Austin returned them a letter of congratulation and thanks.<sup>2</sup> They wrote likewise to St Jerom and earnestly prayed him to give their daughter some instructions for the conduct of her life, which he did by a long epistle in which he treated of the chief duties of a Christian virgin, exhorting her particularly to work daily with her hands.<sup>3</sup> Pelagius, who was then in Palestine, sent her also a very long letter, which is extant,<sup>4</sup> and is one of his first writings, in which he began to discover the seeds of his heresy. SS. Austin and Alipius wrote a joint letter to Juliana in 417, to caution her daughter against the poison artfully concealed in the above-mentioned letter.<sup>5</sup> Proba, Juliana, and Demetrias returned to Rome, where this holy virgin flourished in the time of St Leo.

Through the corruption of human nature by sin, pride being become the darling passion of our heart, men are born with a propensity to Pelagianism, or principles which flatter an opinion of our own strength, merit, and self-sufficiency. It is not therefore to be wondered that this heresy found many advocates: next to that of Arianism, the church never received a more dangerous assault. The wound which this monster caused would certainly have been much deeper had not God raised up this eminent doctor of his grace to be a bulwark for the defence of the truth. He was a trumpet to excite the zeal of the other pastors and, as it were, the soul of all their deliberations, councils, and endeavours to extinguish the rising flame. To him is the church indebted as to the chief instrument of God in overthrowing this heresy. From its ashes sprang Semipelagianism, the authors of which were certain priests, bishops, and monks in Gaul, at Lerins, and in other parts about Marseilles. St Prosper and Hilarius, two zealous and learned laymen, informed St Austin by letters<sup>6</sup> in 429 that these persons expressed the utmost admiration for all his other actions and words, but took offence at his doctrine of grace, as if it destroyed free-will in man: they taught that the beginning of faith and the first desire of

<sup>1</sup> St Hier. Ep. 8.

<sup>2</sup> St Hieron. Ep. 8, ad Demetriad.

<sup>3</sup> St Aug. Ep. 188, ad Julian. t. ii. p. 692.

<sup>4</sup> St Aug. Ep. 150.

<sup>5</sup> Apud. St Aug. t. ii. Append. Ep. 17, ol. 141.

<sup>6</sup> Ap. St. Aug. Ep. 225, 226.

virtue are from the creature, and move God to bestow that grace which is necessary for men to execute and accomplish good works. They said that, as to children who die without baptism, and those infidels to whom the faith is never preached, the reason of their misfortune is that God foresees they would not make a good use of longer life or of the gospel; and that he on that account deprives them of those graces. St Austin, in answer to these letters, wrote two books against this error, one entitled "On the Predestination of the Saints," the other, "On the Gift of Perseverance," showing that the authors of this doctrine did not recede from the great principles of Pelagius, and that to ascribe to the creature the beginning of virtue is to give the whole to it, not to God. The saint treats the Semipelagians as brethren, because they erred without obstinacy, and their error had not been yet condemned by any express definition of the church. The principal persons who espoused it seem to have been Cassian and Marseilles, and certain monks of Lerins. Faustus, Abbot of Lerins, and afterwards Bishop of Ries in 462, several of whose works are extant, carried this error to the greatest length. He died in 480. The Semipelagian heresy was condemned in the second council of Orange, under St Cæsarius, in 529, which was confirmed by Pope Boniface II in a letter to St Cæsarius.

The two works which do most honour to St Austin's name are those of his Confessions and Retractations; in the former of which, with the most sincere humility and compunction, he lays open the errors of his conduct, and in the latter those of his judgment. This work of his Retractations he began in the year 426, the seventy-second of his age, reviewing his writings, which were very numerous, and correcting the mistakes he had made in a humble sense of them, and with a surprising candour and severity never seeking the least gloss or excuse to extenuate them.<sup>1</sup> To have more leisure to finish this and his other writings, he proposed to his clergy and people to choose for his coadjutor Eradius, the youngest among his priests, but a person of great virtue and prudence, and his election was confirmed with great acclamations of the people on the 26th of September 426. St Austin, however, would not have him consecrated before his death on account of the canon which forbade two bishops to be ordained for the same city at a time; but he desired the people for the future to address themselves to Eradius in all their concerns. Count Boniface, a chief commander in the imperial forces in Africa (to whom Placidia and Valentinian III were chiefly indebted for the empire, for which several rebels had contended with them), after the death of his wife had taken a resolution to forsake the world and to embrace a monastic life. St Austin and St Alipius dissuaded him from taking that step, imagining that in his present situation he was more serviceable to the church and state.<sup>2</sup> By insensible degrees he afterwards fell from his practices of devotion and good resolutions, and having been

<sup>1</sup> T. i. p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Procop. de bello Vandal lib. i. c. 8.

obliged by the emperor's order to go over into Spain, he there married a second time, and took to wife an Arian woman related to the kings of the Vandals, which alliance procured him a share in their friendship, though he insisted that she should first become a Catholic. This affinity gave occasion to the general Aëtius, his rival, to render his fidelity suspected to Placidia, daughter of Theodosius the Great, sister to the late Emperor Honorius, widow of the general Constantius, and at that time regent of the empire during the minority of her son, Valentinian III. Boniface resented his disgrace and saw his ruin inevitable, wherefore he made a treaty with Gontharis and Genseric, kings of the Vandals in Spain, and standing upon his defence defeated three captains that were sent by Placidia and Aëtius against him. St Austin wrote an excellent letter of advice,<sup>1</sup> exhorting him to do penance for his sins, to return to his duty, to forgive all injuries, and, if his wife consented, to embrace a state of continency, according to his former purpose; but as he could not now do this without her consent, the saint set before his eyes his duty in a married state not to love the world, to commit no evil, to subdue his passions, pray, give alms, do penance, and fast as much as his health would give him leave. We do not find that Boniface was disposed as yet to follow his advice. Indeed, the step he had then taken made it difficult to provide for his safety; and St Austin, who was well acquainted how precarious and delicate a matter it is to be involved in the jealousies and intrigues of courts, had no advice which he would venture to give on that head. "You will perhaps say to me," said he, "What would you have me to do in this extremity? If you advise with me concerning your secular affairs, and the means how to preserve or increase your wealth, I know not what answer to make you. Uncertain things cannot admit of certain counsels; but if you consult me for the salvation of your soul, I know very well what to say: 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.' (1 John ii. 15.) Show your courage—repent, pray with zeal and warmth," &c.

The Vandals under Genseric, with an army of fourscore thousand men, sailed from Spain into Africa, in May 428, upon the invitation of Count Boniface. Possidius, Bishop of Calama, an eye-witness, describes the dreadful ravages by which they filled with horror and desolation all those rich provinces as they marched. Of the great number of churches in Africa there were hardly three remaining (namely, Carthage, Hippo, and Cirtha) whose cities were yet standing and not laid in ruins. Mansuetus, Bishop of Uri, was burnt at the gate of Furnes, and Papinian, Bishop of Vita, was burnt with red-hot bars of iron.

Amidst this universal desolation St Austin was consulted by a bishop named Quodvultdeus, and afterwards by Honoratus, the pious Bishop of Thabenna, whether it was lawful for bishops or other clergymen to fly

<sup>1</sup> St Aug. Ep. 220.

upon the approach of the barbarians. St Austin's answer to Quodvultdeus is lost; but in that to Honoratus<sup>1</sup> he refers to it, and repeats the same excellent maxims. He affirms that it is lawful for a bishop or priest to fly and forsake the flock when he alone is aimed at by name, and the people are threatened with no danger, but left quiet; or when the people are all fled, so that the pastor has none left who have need of his ministry; or when the same ministry may be better performed by others who have not the like occasion of flight. In all other cases, he says pastors are obliged to watch over their flock, which Christ has committed to them; neither can they forsake it without a crime, as he proves in terms dictated by the fire of his fervent charity, and with reasons supported by a zeal altogether divine. Representing the desolation of a town which is like to be taken, and the necessity of the presence of Christ's ministers, he writes as follows: "In such occasions what flocking is there to the church of persons of all ages and sexes! whereof some require baptism, others reconciliation (or absolution), others to be put under penance, and all crave comfort. If then no ministers are to be found, what misfortune is that for such as go out of this life unregenerate, or if penitents, not absolved! What grief is it to their kindred, if they be faithful, that they cannot hope to see them with them in everlasting rest! What cries! what lamentations! nay, what imprecations from some, to see themselves without ministers and without sacraments! If, on the contrary, ministers have proved faithful in not forsaking their people, they are an assistance to all the world as God shall give them power. Some are baptized; others are reconciled; no one is deprived of the communion of our Lord's body. All are comforted, fortified, and exhorted to implore by fervent prayers the assistance of the divine mercy."

Count Darius was sent by the Empress Placidia into Africa to treat of peace; Boniface produced to him authentic vouchers how much he had been betrayed and driven to extremities by the treachery of Aëtius towards him, and returning to his allegiance was again intrusted with the command of the imperial army. He endeavoured to retrieve the loss of Africa; but it was then too late. He tried to draw off the barbarians first by money, afterwards by force of arms, but without success. Count Darius wrote to St Austin with extraordinary respect, and prayed him that he would send him his book of Confessions. The saint answered his compliments with unfeigned humility, and told him that he who finds not in himself those virtues for which he is commended is but the more ashamed to see himself thought to be what he is not, but what he ought to be, and adds: "The caresses of this world are more dangerous than its persecutions." Count Boniface, after having been defeated in battle, fled to Hippo, which was the strongest fortress in Africa. Possidius and several neighbouring bishops

<sup>1</sup> St Aug. Ep. 228, p. 830, t. ii.



took refuge in the same place. The Vandals appeared before that city about the end of May 430, besieging it by land, and at the same time blocking up its harbour with their fleet by sea. The siege continued fourteen months. In the third month St Austin was seized with a fever, and from the first moment of his illness doubted not but it was a summons of God who called him to himself. Ever since he retired from the world, death had been the chief subject of his meditations; and, in his last illness, he spoke of his passage with great cheerfulness, saying, "We have a merciful God." He often spoke of the resignation and joy of St Ambrose in his last moments; and of the saying of Christ to a certain bishop in a vision mentioned by St Cyprian:<sup>1</sup> "You are afraid to suffer here, and unwilling to go hence: what shall I do with you?" He also mentioned the last words of a certain friend and fellow-bishop, who when he was departing out of this world said to one that was telling him that he might recover of that illness: "If I must die once, why not now?" How much we are bound to take a reasonable care of our health above other temporal goods, for all the necessary purposes of life, he proves in his letter to Proby:<sup>2</sup> yet he often teaches that it is a mark and test of our loving God to desire vehemently by death to be united eternally and intimately to God in his perfect love and uninterrupted praise:<sup>3</sup> "What love of Christ can that be," says he,<sup>4</sup> "to fear lest he come whom you say you love? O brethren, are we not ashamed to say, we love, whilst we add that we are afraid lest he come?"

He was not able to contain within his breast the desires of his soul, in which he sighed after the glorious day of eternity, when we shall behold and possess God our sovereign good, the object of all our desires. He redoubled his fervour in these holy sighs as he drew nearer his term; and he prepared himself for his passage to eternity by the most humble compunction and penance. He used often to say in familiar discourse that, after the remission of sins received in baptism, the most perfect Christian ought not to leave this world without condign penance. In his last illness he ordered the penitential psalms of David to be written out and hung in tablets upon the wall by his bed; and as he there lay sick, he read them with abundance of tears.<sup>5</sup> Not to be interrupted in these devotions, he desired, about ten days before his death, that no one should come to him except at those times when either the physicians came to visit him or his food was brought to him. This was constantly observed, and all the rest of his time was spent in prayer. Though the strength of his body daily and hourly declined, yet his senses and intellectual faculties continued sound to the last. He calmly resigned his spirit into the hands of God, from whom he had received it, on the 28th of August 430, after having lived

<sup>1</sup> St Cypr. lib. de Mortalit.<sup>2</sup> Ep. 130, c. 3, p. 385.<sup>3</sup> Enar. 85, n. 11, et. Quæst. Evang. in Matt. qu. 17.<sup>4</sup> In Ps. xcvi.<sup>5</sup> Possid. c. 31.

seventy-six years and spent almost forty of them in the labours of the ministry. He made no will; for this poor man of Christ had nothing to bequeath. He had given charge that the library which he had bestowed on his church should be carefully preserved.

Possidius adds, "We being present, a sacrifice was offered to God for his recommendation, and so he was buried," in the same manner as St Austin mentions to have been done for his mother.<sup>1</sup> The same author tells us that, whilst the saint lay sick in bed, by the imposition of his hands he restored to perfect health a sick man who, upon the intimation made to him in a vision, was brought to him for that purpose; and he says, "I knew, both when he was priest and when he was bishop, that being requested to pray for certain persons that were possessed, he had poured out prayers and supplications to our Lord, and the devils departed from them."<sup>2</sup> An authentic account of several other miracles with which he was favoured by God may be read in his life, compiled by the pious and learned Mr Woodhead.<sup>3</sup> Bede says, in his true Martyrology, that the body of St Austin was translated into Sardinia, and in his time redeemed out of the hands of the Saracens, and deposited in the Church of St Peter at Pavia, about the year 720. Oldrad, Archbishop of Milan, wrote a history of this translation by order of Charlemagne, extracted from authentic archives then kept at Pavia. He says that the bishops, who were banished by Huneric into Sardinia, took with them these relics, about fifty years after the saint's death, and that they remained in that island till Luitprand, the pious and magnificent king of the Lombards, procured them from the Saracens for a great sum of money. He took care to have this sacred treasure hid with the utmost care under a brick wall, in a coffin of lead enclosed in another of silver, the whole within a coffin of marble, upon which, in many places, was engraved the name "Augustinus." In this condition the sacred bones were discovered in 1695. They were incontestably proved authentic by the Bishop of Pavia in 1728, whose sentence was confirmed by Pope Benedict XIII in the same year, as is related by Fontanini in an express dissertation, and by Tournon in his life of that pope.<sup>4</sup> The Church of St Peter, in Pavia, from this treasure is now called St Austin's, and is served both by Austin Friars and by regular canons of his rule. His festival is mentioned in the Martyrology which bears the name of St Jerom, and in that of Carthage, as old as the sixth century. In the life of St Cæsarius, wrote in that age, it is mentioned to have been then kept with great solemnity. It is a holiday of obligation in all the dominions of the King of Spain. A general council being summoned to meet at Ephesus against Nestorius, in 431, the Emperor Theodosius sent a

<sup>1</sup> St Aug. Conf. lib. ix. c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Possid. c. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Life of St Austin, par. 2, c. 13, p. 454.

<sup>4</sup> T. vi. p. 404, et Justus Fontaninus de corpore St Augustini Hipp. Ticini reperto, ubi antiquæ Ecclesiæ disciplina in tumultu corpore St Augustini servata explicatur. Romæ, 1728, 4to.

particular rescript, by a special messenger, into Africa to invite St Austin to it, but he was departed to eternal bliss.<sup>1</sup>

The eminence of the sanctity of this illustrious doctor was derived from the deep foundation of his humility, according to the maxim which he lays down: "Attempt not to attain true wisdom by any other way than that which God hath enjoined. This is in the first, second, and third place, humility; and this would I answer as often as you ask me. Not that there are not other precepts, but unless humility go before, accompany, and follow after, all that we do well is snatched out of our hands by pride. As Demosthenes, the prince of orators, being asked which among the precepts of eloquence was to be observed first? is said to have answered, 'Pronunciation, or the delivery.' Again, which second? 'Pronunciation.' Which third? 'Nothing else,' said he, 'but pronunciation.' So, if you should ask me concerning the precepts of the Christian religion, I should answer you, Nothing but humility. Our Lord Jesus Christ was made so low in order to teach us this humility, which a certain most ignorant science opposeth."<sup>2</sup>

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 28 :*

ST AUGUSTINE, Bishop and Doctor of the Church, who died in 430 : THE VENERABLE EDMUND ARROWSMITH, S.J., martyr : ST HERMES, martyred in Rome in the persecution of the Emperor Adrian, about 132 : ST JULIAN, martyr at Brioude, who "well knew how to reconcile the profession of arms with the maxims of the Gospel."

## AUGUST 29

### THE BEHEADING OF ST JOHN BAPTIST

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST was called by God to be the forerunner of his Divine Son, to usher him into the world, and to prepare mankind by penance to receive their great Redeemer, whom the prophets had foretold at a distance through every age from the beginning of the world; never ceasing to excite the people of God to faith and hope in him, by whom alone they were to be saved. The more the sublime function of this saint surpassed that of the Jewish legislator and of all the patriarchs and ancient prophets, the greater were the graces by which he was fitted for the same. Some of the prophets had been sanctified from their birth; but neither in so wonderful nor in so abundant a manner as the Baptist. In order to preserve his innocence spotless, and to improve the extraordinary graces which he had received, he was directed by the Holy Ghost to lead an austere and contemplative life in the wilderness, in the continual exercises of devout prayer and penance, from his infancy till he was thirty years of age.

God, by a revelation, intimated to John his commission of precursor in the wilderness, and the faithful minister began to discharge it in the desert of Judæa itself, near the borders, where it was thinly inhabited,

<sup>1</sup> Conc. t. iii.

<sup>2</sup> St Aug. Ep. 118, ol. 56, ad Dioscorum.

upon the banks of the Jordan towards Jericho. Clothed with the weeds of penance, he announced to all men the obligation they lay under of washing away their iniquities with the tears of sincere compunction; and proclaimed the Messiah, who was then coming to make his appearance among them.<sup>1</sup> He was received by the people as the true herald of the most high God, and his voice was, as it were, a trumpet sounding from heaven to summon all men to avert the divine judgments, and to prepare themselves to reap the benefit of the mercy that was offered them. He exhorted all to works of charity and to a reformation of their lives, and those who addressed themselves to him in these dispositions he baptized in the river. The Jews practised several religious washings of the body as legal purifications; but no baptism before this of John had so great and mystical a signification. It chiefly represented the manner in which the souls of men must be cleansed from all sin and vicious habits, to be made partakers of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and it was an emblem of the interior effects of sincere repentance; but it differed entirely from the great sacrament of baptism which Christ soon after instituted, to which it was much inferior in virtue and efficacy, and of which it was a kind of type.<sup>2</sup>

St John's baptism was a temporary rite, by which men who were under the law were admitted to some new spiritual privileges, which they had not before, by him who was the messenger of Christ, and of his new covenant. Whence it is called by the fathers a partition between the law and the gospel.<sup>3</sup> This baptism of John prepared men to become Christians, but did not make them so. It was not even conferred in the name of Christ, or in that of the Holy Ghost, who had not been as yet given.<sup>4</sup> When St John had already preached and baptized about six months, our Redeemer went from Nazareth, and presented himself, among others, to be baptized by him. The Baptist knew him by a divine revelation, and, full of awe and respect for his sacred person, at first excused himself, but at length acquiesced out of obedience. The Saviour of sinners was pleased to be baptized among sinners, not to be cleansed himself, but to sanctify the waters, says St Ambrose,<sup>5</sup> that is, to give them the virtue to cleanse away the sins of men. St Austin and St Thomas Aquinas think he then instituted the holy sacrament of baptism, which he soon after administered by his disciples,<sup>6</sup> whom doubtless he had first baptized himself.<sup>7</sup>

The solemn admonitions of the Baptist, attended with the most extraordinary innocence and sanctity, and the marks of his divine commission, procured him a mighty veneration and authority among the

<sup>1</sup> Luke iii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iii. 11; Acts xix. 5; St Ambr. lib. ii. in Luc. t. iii. p. 45; St Aug. Enchir. c. 48, 49, t. vi. p. 214, &c. See Conc. Trid. Sess. 7, Can. 2, Bellarmin, Nat. Alexander, Tournely, Tr. de Bapt.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xvi. 16; St Aug. lib. v. de Bapt. c. 9, t. ix. p. 147.

<sup>4</sup> John vii. 39.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. ii. in Luc. t. iii. p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> John iii. 26; iv. 2.

<sup>7</sup> St Aug. 44, ol. 163, c. 5, Ep. 265, ol. 108, et Tr. 5, 13, 15 et 16 in Joan.

Jews, and several began to look upon him as the Messiah, who, from the ancient prophecies, was expected by all the nations of the East to appear about that time in Judæa, as Suetonius, Tacitus, and Josephus testify.<sup>1</sup> To remove all thoughts of this kind, he freely declared that he only baptized sinners with water in order to repentance and a new life; but that there was one ready to appear among them, who would baptize them with the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and who so far exceeded him in power and excellency, that he was not worthy to do for him the meanest servile office. Nevertheless, so strong were the impressions which the preaching and deportment of John made upon the minds of the Jews, that they sent to him a solemn embassy of priests and Levites from Jerusalem to inquire of him if he was not the Christ.<sup>2</sup> St John "confessed, and did not deny; and he confessed, I am not the Christ." He also told the deputies that he was "neither Elias nor a prophet."

Being pressed to give some account who he was, he calls himself "the voice of one crying in the desert"; he will not have men have the least regard for him, but turns their attention entirely from himself, as unworthy to be named or thought of, and only bids them listen to the summons which God sent them by his mouth. A voice is no more than an empty sound; it is a mere nothing. How eloquent does sincere humility render the saints to express the sentiments of their own nothingness!

The Baptist proclaimed Jesus to be the Messias at his baptism; he did the same when the Jews consulted him from Jerusalem whether he was not the Messias: again, when seeing him come towards him the day following, he called him, "The Lamb of God;" also when his disciples consulted him about the baptism of Jesus, and on other occasions. He baptized first in the Jordan, on the borders of the desert of Judæa; afterwards on the other side of that river, at a place called Bethania, or rather Bethabara, which word signifies House of the Passage or common ford: lastly at Ennon, near Salim, a place abounding in waters, situated in Judæa near the Jordan. In the discharge of his commission he was a perfect model to be imitated by all true ministers of the divine word. Like an angel of the Lord "he was neither moved by benedictions nor by maledictions,"<sup>3</sup> having only God and his holy will in view. Entirely free from vanity or love of popular applause, he preached not himself, but Christ. His tenderness and charity won the hearts, and his zeal gave him a commanding influence over the minds of his hearers. He reproved the vices of all orders of men with impartial freedom, and an undaunted authority; the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, the profaneness of the Sadducees, the extortion of the publicans, the rapine and licentiousness of the soldiers, and the incest of Herod himself.

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. in Vespas. c. 4; Tacitus, Hist. lib. v. c. 4; Joseph. De Bello Judaic. lib. vii. c. 12 p. 96r.

<sup>2</sup> John i. 20.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Kings xiv. 17.

The tetrarch Herod Antipas going to Rome in the sixteenth year of Tiberius, the thirty-third of Christ, lodged on his way at the house of his brother Herod Philip, and was smitten with love for his wife Herodias, who was niece to them both. He discovered to her his criminal passion, and she consented to leave her husband and marry him, upon condition that he first divorced his wife, who was daughter of Aretas, King of the Arabs. To this he readily agreed, and being returned from Rome in the following autumn, he considered how to rid himself of his wife. The princess having got intelligence of his resolution, made her escape, and fled to her father. By her voluntary retreat Herod Antipas saw himself at liberty, and, by a notorious infringement of all laws divine and human, married Herodias, his sister-in-law, though she had children by her own husband, Philip, his brother, who was yet living.<sup>1</sup> St John Baptist boldly reprehended the tetrarch and his accomplice for so scandalous an incest and adultery, and said to that prince: "It is not lawful for thee to take thy brother's wife." Herod feared and revered John, knowing him to be a holy man; and he did many things by his advice; but, on the other hand, he could not bear that his main sore should be touched, and was highly offended at the liberty which the preacher took in that particular. Thus, whilst he respected him as a saint, he hated him as a censor, and felt a violent struggle in his own breast, between his veneration for the sanctity of the prophet, and the reproach of his own conduct. His passion still got the better, and held him captive, and his flame was nourished by the flatteries of courtiers, and the clamours and artifices of Herodias, who, like an enraged infernal fury, left nothing unattempted to take away the life of him who durst impeach her conduct, and disturb her criminal pleasures and ambition. Herod, to content her, cast the saint into prison. Josephus says the servant of God was confined in the castle of Macherus, two leagues beyond the lake Asphaltites, upon the borders of Arabia Petræa. St John, hearing in prison of Christ's wonderful works and preaching, sent two of his disciples to him for their information, not doubting but that Christ would satisfy them that he was the Messiah;<sup>2</sup> and that by his answers they would lay aside their prejudices, and join themselves to him.

Herod continued still to respect the man of God, frequently sent for him, and heard him discourse with much pleasure, though he was troubled when he was admonished by him of his faults. Herodias, on the other hand, never ceased by her instigations to endeavour to exasperate him against the holy man, and to seek an opportunity to compass his destruction. An occasion at length fell out favourable to her designs. It was about a year since John the Baptist had been committed close prisoner, when

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiv. 3; Mark vi. 17; Luke iii. 19; Joseph. lib. xviii. c. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xi. 1, 2, &c.; Luke vii. 13.

Herod, upon the return of his birthday, made a splendid entertainment for the principal nobility of Galilee, in the castle of Macherus. The dancing of Salome, and other circumstances of this banquet, are sensible proofs to what an infamous pitch of impudence debauchery was carried in this impious court. Salome, a daughter of Herodias by her lawful husband, pleased Herod by her dancing, insomuch that he promised her, with the sacred bond of an oath, to grant her whatsoever she asked, though it amounted to half of his dominions. From this instance St Ambrose and other fathers take occasion to show the dangerous consequences of a passion for dancing, and the depravity from which it often takes its rise. Salome having received the above-said ample promise made her by Herod, consulted with her mother what to ask. Herodias was so entirely devoured by lust and ambition, as willingly to forgo every other consideration, that she might be at liberty to gratify her passions, and remove him who stood in her way in the pursuit of her criminal inclinations. She therefore instructed her daughter to demand the death of John the Baptist, and her jealousy was so impatient of the least delay, for fear the tyrant might relent if he had time to enter into himself, that she persuaded the young damsel to make it part of her petition that the head of the prisoner should be forthwith brought to her in a dish. This strange request startled the tyrant himself, and caused a damp upon his spirits. He, however, assented, though with reluctance, as men often feel a cruel sting of remorse, and suffer the qualms of a disturbed conscience flying in their face and condemning them, whilst they are drawn into sin by the tyranny of a vicious habit, or some violent passion.

The evangelist also informs us that Herod had conceived a good opinion of the Baptist as a just and holy man; also, that he feared the resentment of the people, who held the man of God in the highest veneration and esteem. Moreover, it was a constant rule or custom that neither the prince's birthday, nor the mirth of a public assembly and banquet, were to be stained with the condemnation or execution of any criminal whatever; only favours and pardons were to be granted on such occasions. But the tyrant, without giving the saint a hearing, or allowing him so much as the formality of a trial, sent a soldier of his guard to behead him in prison, with an order to bring his head in a charger, and present it to Salome. This being executed, the damsel was not afraid to take that present into her hands, and deliver it to her mother. St Jerom relates,<sup>1</sup> that the furious Herodias made it her inhuman pastime to prick the sacred tongue with a bodkin, as Fulvia had done Cicero's. Thus died the great forerunner of our blessed Saviour, about two years and three months after his entrance upon his public ministry, about

<sup>1</sup> St Hier. lib. iii. contra Rufin. c. 11.

the time of the Paschal solemnity, a year before the death of our blessed Redeemer.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 29 :*

THE BEHEADING OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST : ST MERRI, in Latin MEDERICUS, nobly born, at Autun, in the seventh century, he presented himself at the Abbey of St Martin and grew there into the perfect exercise of virtue : ST SEBBI or SEBBA, who preferred a monastic life to the riches of a kingdom : and ST SABINA, martyr, a rich widow converted by the good life of her servant Seraphia, a Syrian ; both became illustrious by their glorious martyrdom.

AUGUST 30

ST ROSE OF LIMA, VIRGIN

(A.D. 1617)

[From her life written by Hansen, a Dominican friar, and from the elegant panegyric pronounced by F. Paul Oliva, S. J., in presence of the pope.]

ASIA, Europe, and Africa had been watered with the blood of many martyrs, and adorned, during many ages, with the shining example of innumerable saints, whilst, by the inscrutable judgments of God, the vast regions of America lay barren, and, as it were, abandoned, till the faith of Christ began to enlighten them, and this saint appeared on that hemisphere like a rose amidst thorns, the first-fruits of its canonized saints. She was of Spanish extraction, born at Lima, the capital of Peru, in 1586. She was christened Isabel; but the figure and colour of her face in the cradle seeming, in some measure, to resemble a beautiful rose, the name of Rose was given her. From her infancy her patience in suffering and her love of mortification were extraordinary, and whilst yet a child, she ate no fruit, and fasted three days a week, allowing herself on them only bread and water, and on other days, taking only unsavoury herbs and pulse. When she was grown up, her garden was planted only with bitter herbs, and interspersed with figures of crosses. In her exercises she took St Catharine of Sienna for her model. Every incentive of pride and sensuality was to her an object of abhorrence; and, for fear of taking any secret satisfaction in vanity, she studied to make those things in which it might insinuate its poison, painful to her. One day her mother having put on her head a garland of flowers, she secretly stuck in it a pin, which pricked her so deep, that the maid at night could not take off the garland without some difficulty. Hearing others frequently commend her beauty, and fearing lest it should be an occasion of temptation to anyone, whenever she was to go abroad to any public place, she used, the night before, to rub her face and hands with the bark and powder of Indian pepper, which is a violent corrosive, in order to disfigure her skin with little blotches and swellings. A young man happening one day to admire the fineness of the skin of her hand, she immediately ran and thrust both her hands into hot lime, saying, "Never let my hands be to anyone an occasion of temptation." What a confusion is this example to those



who make it their study to set themselves off by their dress, to become snares to others! We admire a St Bennet on briers, a St Bernard freezing in the ice, and a St Francis in the snow; these saints were cruel to themselves not to be overcome by the devil; but Rose punishes herself to preserve others. Thus did she arm herself against her external enemies, and against the revolt of her senses. But she was aware that this victory would avail her little unless she died to herself by crucifying in her heart inordinate self-love, which is the source of pride and all the other passions. Rose triumphed over this subtle enemy by the most profound humility, and the most perfect obedience and denial of her own will. She never departed wilfully from the order of her parents in the least tittle, and gave proofs of her scrupulous obedience and invincible patience under all pains, labour, and contradictions, which surprised all that knew her.

Her parents, by the vicissitude of worldly affairs, fell from a state of opulence into great distress, and Rose was taken into the family of the treasurer Gonsalvo, by that gentleman's pious lady; and by working there all day in the garden, and late at night with her needle, she relieved them in their necessities. These employments were agreeable to her penitential spirit and humility, and afforded her an opportunity of never interrupting the interior commerce of her soul with God. She probably would never have entertained any thoughts of another state if she had not found herself importuned by her friends to marry. To rid herself of such troublesome solicitations, and more easily to comply with the obligation she had taken upon herself by a vow of serving God in a state of holy virginity, she enrolled herself in the third Order of St Dominic. Her love of solitude made her choose for her dwelling a little lonely cell in a garden. Extraordinary fasts, hair cloths, studded iron chains which she wore about her waist, bitter herbs mingled in the sustenance which she took, and other austerities, were the inventions of her spirit of mortification and penance. She wore upon her head a thin circle of silver (a metal very common in Peru), studded on the inside with little sharp pricks or nails, which wounded her head, in imitation of a crown of thorns. This she did to put her in mind of the adorable passion of Christ, which incomprehensible mystery of divine love and mercy she desired to have always in her thoughts. She never spoke of herself but as of the basest of sinful monsters, the sink of the universe, unworthy to breathe the air, to behold the light, or to walk on the ground; and she never ceased to adore the infinite goodness and mercy of God towards her. So ardent was her love of God, that as often as she spoke of it, the accent of her voice, and the fire which sparkled in her countenance, discovered the flame which consumed her holy soul. This appeared most sensibly when she was in the presence of the blessed sacrament, and when in receiving it she united her heart to her beloved in that wonderful fountain of his love;



SAINT ROSA LIMENSIS

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This lovely picture shows St. Rose of Lima in her habit of the Dominican Order. On her head is a circle of metal which is studded inside with little sharp nails in imitation of the crown of thorns. Rose chose for her home a bare cell in the garden and there prayed and fasted, her thoughts forever on the sufferings of Christ. She was the first canonized saint of the New World.

her whole life was a continual vehement thirst after that divine banquet, in which she found her greatest comfort and support during the course of her earthly pilgrimage. God favoured the fervour of her charity with many extraordinary graces; and Christ once in a vision called her soul his spouse. But, for her humiliation, and the exercise of her virtue, she suffered, during fifteen years, grievous persecutions from her friends and others; and, what were much more severe trials, interior desolation, and dreadful agonies of spiritual anguish in her soul. The devil also assaulted her with violent temptations, filling her imagination with filthy phantoms. But God afterwards recompensed her fidelity and constancy in this life with extraordinary caresses. Under long and most painful sicknesses it was her prayer, "Lord, increase my sufferings, and with them increase thy love in my heart." She happily passed to eternal bliss on the 24th of August, 1617, being thirty-one years old. The chapter, senate, and all the most honourable companies of the city, by turns, carried her body to the grave; the archbishop assisted at her funeral. Several miracles wrought by her means were juridically proved by one hundred and eighty witnesses before the apostolical commissaries. She was canonized by Clement X in 1671, and the 30th day of August has been appointed for her festival.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 30 :*

ST AGILUS OF AILE, Abbot : ST FELIX and ST ADAUCTUS ; Felix, a priest, going to martyrdom, and Adauctus, a stranger, so inflamed at sight of his constancy that he declared aloud that he too was a Christian. They were beheaded together. ST FIAKER of Ireland, anchorit : who left his friends and his country in the flower of his age to devote himself to God : ST PAMMARCIUS, a Roman senator, a schoolfellow in youth of St Jerome : and ST ROSE OF LIMA, virgin, 1617.

#### AUGUST 31

### ST AIDAN, OR ÆDAN, C., BISHOP OF LINDISFARNE

WHEN the holy King Oswald desired the bishops of Scotland to send him a person honoured with the episcopal character to preach the faith to his Anglo-Saxon pagan subjects, and plant the church among them, the first person who came was of a rough austere temper, and therefore could do little good, and being soon forced to return home again, he laid the fault on the rude, indocile dispositions of the English. Hereupon the Scottish clergy called a synod to deliberate what was best to be done. Aidan, who was present, told the prelate, on his blaming the obstinacy of the English, that the fault lay rather in him, who had been too harsh and severe to an ignorant people, who ought first to be fed with the milk of milder doctrine, till they should be able to digest more solid food. At this discourse the whole assembly turned their eyes upon him, as one endued with prudence, the mother of other virtues; and he was appointed to the great and arduous mission.

Aidan was a native of Ireland (then called Scotland), and a monk of Hij, the great monastery which his countryman, St Columba, had

founded, and to which the six neighbouring islands were given, as Buchanan mentions. He was most graciously received by King Oswald, who bestowed on him for his episcopal seat the isle of Lindisfarne. Of his humility and piety Bede gives an edifying account, and proposes him as an excellent pattern for succeeding bishops and clergymen to follow.

He obliged all those who travelled with him to bestow their time either in reading the Scriptures, or in learning the psalms by heart. By his actions he showed that he neither sought nor loved the good things of this world; the presents which were made to him by the king, or by other rich men, he distributed among the poor, or expended in redeeming captives. He rarely would go to the king's table, and never without taking with him one or two of his clergy, and always after a short repast made haste away to read or pray in the church, or in his cell. From his example even the laity took the custom of fasting till none, that is, till three in the afternoon, on all Wednesdays and Fridays, except during the fifty days of the Easter-time. Our venerable historian admires his apostolic liberty in reproving the proud and the great, his love of peace, charity, continence, humility, and all other virtues, which he not only practised himself, but, by his spirit and example, communicated to a rough and barbarous nation, which he imbued with the meekness of the cross. Aidan fixed his see at Lindisfarne, and founded a monastery there in the year of our Lord 635, the hundred and eighty-eighth after the coming of the English Saxons into Britain, the thirty-ninth after the arrival of St Augustine, and the second of the reign of King Oswald. From this monastery all the churches of Bernicia, or the northern part of the kingdom of the Northumbers, from the Tyne to the Firth of Edinburgh, had their beginning; as had also some of those of the Deïri, who inhabited the southern part of the same kingdom from the Tyne to the Humber. The see of York had been vacant thirty years, ever since St Paulinus left it; so that St Aidan governed all the churches of the Northumbers for seventeen years, till his happy death, which happened on the 31st of August, in 651, in the royal villa, Bebbord. He was first buried in the cemetery in Lindisfarne; but when the new Church of St Peter was built there his body was translated into it, and deposited on the right hand of the altar. Colman, when he returned into Scotland, carried with him part of his bones to St Colomb's, or Hij. He is named on this day in the Roman Martyrology. See Bede; Leland Collect. t. i. p. 412, alias 366.

*The following feasts are celebrated on August 31 :*

ST AIDAN of Ireland, Bishop of Lindisfarne: ST CUTHBURGE, Queen, virgin and Abbess, sister to King Ina: ST ISABEL, a daughter of Louis VIII of France, who had so perfect a knowledge of Latin that she frequently corrected the compositions of her chaplains in that language. Her character was a combination of every virtue: ST RAYMOND NONNATUS, made Cardinal by Pope Gregory IX; but he neither changed his dress nor left his poor cell after that honour. This saint gave up his liberty to ransom a Christian captive, and devoted his substance to the redemption of captives.

SEPTEMBER 1

ST GILES, ABBOT

(About the end of the Seventh Century)

[The life of St Giles was compiled by one who collected whatever memorials he could amass together, without discernment, and who confounded the saint with the Abbot of Arles of the same name. See Mabillon, *Annal. Ben.* t. iii. p. 433, et *Sæc. 3, Bened. in Proleg.*; and especially the learned dissertation and remarks of Stillingfleet the Bollandist, *Sept. t. i. p. 284*; also the Maurist monks, *Hist. Littér. de la France*, t. x. p. 60.]

THIS saint, whose name has been held in great veneration for several ages in France and England, is said to have been an Athenian by birth, and of noble extraction. His extraordinary piety and learning drew the admiration of the world upon him in such a manner that it was impossible for him to enjoy in his own country that obscurity and retirement which was the chief object of his desires on earth; and he dreaded the sunshine of temporal prosperity and the applause of men, as fraught with dangerous poison, which easily insinuates itself into the heart. Therefore, leaving his own country, he sailed to France, and chose an hermitage, first in the open deserts near the mouth of the Rhone, afterwards nigh the river Gard, and lastly, in a forest in the diocese of Nismes. He passed many years in this close solitude, using no other subsistence than wild herbs or roots, and water, conversing only with God, and living rather like an angel than a man. His historian relates that he was for some time nourished with the milk of a hind in the forest, and that a certain prince discovered him in hunting in those woods, by pursuing the chase of that hind to his hermitage, where the beast had sought for shelter at his feet. The reputation of the sanctity of this holy hermit was much increased by many miracles which he wrought, and which rendered his name famous throughout all France. Some, by mistake, have confounded this saint with one Giles, whom St Cæsarius made abbot of a monastery near the walls of Arles, and whom he sent to Rome with his secretary, Messianus, in 514, to Pope Symmachus, to obtain of him a confirmation of the privileges of the metropolitical Church of Arles. But the Bollandists prove very well, in a long and learned dissertation, that the great St Giles lived only in the end of the seventh and beginning of the eighth century, not in the sixth; and that the French were at that time masters of the country about Nismes. Messianus and Stephen, in the second book of the life of St Cæsarius, informs us that the French took Arles in 541, the year before the death of St Cæsarius; after which, the Goths yielded up

to them that whole province. St Giles was highly esteemed by the French king; but could not be prevailed upon to forsake his solitude. He, however, admitted several disciples, and settled excellent discipline in the monastery of which he was the founder, and which, in succeeding ages, became a flourishing abbey of the Benedictin Order, though it has been long since converted into a collegiate church of canons. A considerable town was built about it, called St Giles's, which was famous in the wars of the Albigenses. This saint is commemorated in the Martyrologies of Bede, Ado, and others; and is the patron of many churches in France, Germany, Poland, &c.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 1 :*

ST FIACRE, in the dioceses of Ireland : ST FIRMINUS II, the third Bishop of Amiens : ST GILES, Abbot, held in great veneration in France and in England, an Athenian by birth : ST LUPUS or LEU, Archbishop of Sens : THE TWELVE BROTHERS, martyrs, being SAINTS FELIX, SABRINIANUS, ARONTIUS, HONORATUS, FORTUNATUS, SABINIANUS, SEPTIMEUS, JANUARIUS, FELIX, VITALIS, SATYRUS, and REPOSITUS, natives of Adrumetum in Africa ; suffered much for the faith in that city and were sent to Italy, where they finished their glorious martyrdom under Valerian, 258.

## SEPTEMBER 2

### ST STEPHEN, KING OF HUNGARY, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 1038)

[From his life written by Chartuiz, and from the historians Bonfinius, in Hist. Hungar. lib. i ; Hermannus Contractus, &c. See also Czuittinger, Specimen Hungariæ Litteratæ, p. 1, t. i ; the Elzivirian edit. of Resp. et Status Hungariæ, pp. 117, 154 ; Antonius Pagi in Baron. and Gabriel de juxta Hornard, Lib. de Initiis Religionis Christianæ inter Hungaros. Francofur. 1740.]

GEYSA, the fourth Duke of the Hungarians, by conversing with certain Christian captives, and afterwards with certain holy missionaries, as Pilgrinus, Bishop of Passaw, St Wolfgang, Bishop of Ratisbon, &c., or their disciples, became infinitely delighted with the sanctity of the maxims of our holy faith, and was convinced of its divine truth and original by the motives and arguments which are, as it were, the stamp which God has put upon his revelation in order to confirm it to us. And though he had reason to fear great disturbances from the ferocity of his people upon a change of religion, he despised such dangers, and was baptized together with his wife Sarloth, and several of his officers and courtiers. Sarloth was so penetrated with the wonderful mysteries of religion, and so strongly affected with the great ideas of eternity, that she walked in the paths of heroic perfection with a fervour not inferior to that of the saints. Being some time after with child, she was assured by St Stephen, the protomartyr, in a dream, that she bore in her womb a son who should complete the work she and her husband had begun, and abolish idolatry in that nation. The child was born in 977 at Gran, the ancient Strigonium, at that time the metropolis of the country, and on account of the above-

mentioned vision was christened Stephen. St Adalbert, Bishop of Prague, who for some time preached the gospel to the Hungarians, and, according to the German historians, baptized St Stephen, had certainly no small share in the honour of his education, and Theodatus, an Italian count of singular piety, was his tutor. Geysa died in 997, and Stephen, who had been chosen waywode, that is, leader of the army, or duke, some time before, then took the reins of the government into his hands.

His first care was to settle a firm peace with all the neighbouring nations. This being done, he turned his thoughts wholly to root out idolatry, and as much as in him lay to make Christ reign in the hearts of all his subjects. Performing himself the part of a missionary, he often accompanied the preachers, and pathetically exhorted his people to open their eyes to the divine truth. Many, however, were so obstinately attached to the superstitions of their ancestors as to take up arms in defence of idolatry: and having at their head a count of great interest and valour, named Zezzard, with a numerous army, they laid siege to Vesprin. St Stephen placed his confidence in the Lord of Hosts, and prepared himself for the engagement by fasting, almsdeeds, and prayer, invoking particularly the intercession of St Martin and St George. Though inferior to the rebels in the number of his forces, by the divine assistance he gave them a total overthrow and slew their leader.

The zealous prince founded the archbishopric of Gran or Strigonium, and ten bishoprics, and sent Astricus or Anastasius, the new elected Bishop of Coloctz, to Rome, to obtain of Pope Sylvester II the confirmation of these foundations, and of many other things which he had done for the honour of God and the exaltation of his holy church; and, at the same time, to beseech his holiness to confer upon him the title of king, which his subjects had long pressed him to assume, and which he now only asked to satisfy their desires, and that he might with more majesty and authority accomplish his great designs for promoting the glory of God and the good of his people. Miceslas, Duke of Poland, upon marrying a Christian princess, the daughter of Boleslas, Duke of Bohemia, had embraced the faith in 965. About thirty-four years after this, he sent an embassy to Rome to obtain the title of king, confirmed to him by the authority of the apostolic see. Sylvester II, who was then pope, was disposed to grant his request, and prepared a rich crown to send him with his blessing. But the extraordinary zeal, piety, and wisdom of St Stephen deserving the preference, his holiness delivered this crown for him to his ambassador, Astric, together with the present of a cross, granting by a special privilege that it should be carried before him in his armies. At the same time he, by a bull, confirmed all the religious foundations which our holy prince had made, and the elections of the bishops. St Stephen went to meet his ambassador upon his return, listened standing, with

great respect, to the pope's bulls whilst they were read, and fell on his knees as often as the name of his holiness was repeated.

The good prince, by a public act, and with extraordinary devotion, declared that he put all his dominions under the special patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and never ceased most earnestly offering his daily prayers to implore her powerful intercession for obtaining the divine blessing upon all his subjects. Whence, in many medals and coins of this kingdom, she is styled patroness of Hungary. At Alba he built a stately church in honour of the Mother of God, in which the kings of Hungary were afterwards both crowned and buried.

St Stephen, who would seek no alliance but by which piety might be strengthened in his realm and family, took to wife Gisela, sister to St Henry, King of Germany, who was shortly after crowned emperor; and that holy prince admirably seconded and assisted our saint in all his pious designs. St Stephen abolished many barbarous and superstitious customs derived from the ancient Scythians, and by severe punishments repressed blasphemy, murder, theft, adultery, and other public crimes. To put a stop to incontinence and idolatry he commanded all persons to marry except religious and churchmen, and forbade all marriages of Christians with idolaters. He was of most easy access to people of all ranks, and listened to everyone's complaints without distinction or preference, except that he appeared most willing to hear the poor, knowing them to be more easily oppressed, and considering that in them we honour Christ, who being no longer among men on earth in his mortal state to receive from us any corporeal services, has substituted and recommended to us the poor in his place and right. The good king provided for their subsistence throughout his whole kingdom, and took them, especially the helpless orphans and widows, under his special protection, declaring himself their patron and father. One day it happened that, whilst he was dealing about his plentiful alms in disguise, a troop of beggars set upon him, threw him down, beat him, plucked him by the beard and hair, and took away his purse, seizing for themselves what he intended for the relief of many others. The king esteemed himself happy to suffer in the service of his Redeemer, and addressed himself in these words to the Blessed Virgin: "See, O queen of heaven, in what manner I am requited by those that belong to your Son, my Divine Saviour. As they are his friends, I receive with joy this treatment from their hands." He learned, however, from this accident no more to expose his person, but he renewed his resolution never to refuse an alms to any poor person that asked him.

St Stephen's excellent code of laws, to this day the basis of the laws of Hungary, are inscribed to his son, Duke Emeric. In fifty-five chapters the pious legislator has comprised the wisest and most holy regulations



of the state. He pathetically exhorts his son to sincere humility (which he calls the sole exaltation of a king), to patience, meekness, assiduous and devout prayer, charity, compassion for the poor, the protection of all that are in distress, &c. He forbids, on pain of severe punishments, all grievous public crimes, especially of impiety and irreligion, as a violation of the Sunday or a fast-day, talking in the church, a culpable neglect to call in the priests to assist dying persons, &c. He commands the most religious respect to be paid to all holy things, and to the clergy.<sup>1</sup> These wholesome laws he caused to be promulgated throughout his dominions, and had them always most strictly observed.

The protection of his people engaged him sometimes in war, wherein he was always victorious. The Prince of Transylvania, his cousin, invaded his dominions; St Stephen defeated him in battle, and made him prisoner; yet gave him his liberty, and restored him his dominions, requiring of him this only condition, that the gospel should be allowed to be freely preached in them. The saint was never the aggressor in any war; that with the Bulgarians was obstinate; but they were at length overcome, and obliged to receive the laws which he prescribed them. There is no saint whose virtue is not exercised by tribulation. Sickness deprived St Stephen of all his children. St Emeric, the eldest, was carried off the last. He had then begun to sustain a great part of the burden of the state, and to be both a comfort and assistant to his father. The interest of the state, and that of the infant church of his kingdom, conspired with nature to make this stroke more severe; but the good king bore the loss with entire resignation, adoring in it the holy will of God. St Emeric was canonized by Benedict IX, and is honoured among the saints on the 4th of November. This affliction weaned the king's heart more and more from the world, and he desired, if it had been possible, to reserve to the care of his own soul the remaining part of his life, that being freed from all worldly concerns, he might be preparing for his last passage. But, as the affairs of both the Church and State did not allow this, he continued to endure the toil of business, knowing that he was accountable to God for the least neglect or omission in the particular duties of his station towards his Creator, his subjects, or himself.

Though brave and expert in war, he had always been a lover of peace: but, from this time, he took a resolution to spill no blood in war, in which he earnestly begged the interposition of Divine Providence, which did not fail him. For to hostilities he, after this, opposed no other arms than fasting, prayers, and tears, and by them alone was ever victorious. After the death of our saint's good friend, St Henry, the emperor, his successor, Conrad II, invaded Hungary with a powerful army in 1030, and advanced so far that St Stephen was compelled to lead out his army against him,

<sup>1</sup> Decreto 2, c. 4: Decreto 1, c. 2, 3.

though still trusting in God that the effusion of blood would be prevented. All things seemed to be disposed for a decisive battle, when St Stephen again recommended himself and his earnest desire of peace to the Blessed Virgin; and to the surprise of all men, the emperor on a sudden turned his back with his army, and without having executed anything, marched home into Germany with as great precipitation as if he had been defeated.

St Stephen laboured three years under a complication of painful distempers. The saint perceiving that his last hour drew near, assembled his nobles, and recommended to them the choice of a successor, obedience to the holy see, and the practice of Christian piety. He then again commended his kingdom to the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, and after having received the sacraments of penance, the viaticum, and extreme unction, happily expired on the feast of the Assumption of our Lady, the 15th of August, in 1038, being threescore years old, of which he had reigned forty-one from the death of his father, and thirty-eight from the time he had been crowned king. His sacred remains were honoured with miracles, and forty-five years after his death, by an order of the pope, at the request of the holy king, St Ladislas, were enshrined and placed in a rich chapel, which bears his name, within the great Church of our Lady at Buda. He was canonized by Benedict IX, in the manner described by Benedict XIV.<sup>1</sup> Innocent XI appointed his festival on the 2nd of September, in 1686, with an office for the whole church, the Emperor Leopold having on that day recovered Buda out of the hands of the Turks, after many signal victories over those infidels. In Hungary, his chief festival is kept on the 20th of August, the day of the translation of his relics.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 2 :*

St JUSTUS, Archbishop of Lyons: BLESSED MARGARET, martyred at Louvain by ruffians, on the banks of the Deel, because she would not consent to sin: THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF SEPTEMBER, at the Calmes, Paris, 1792, honoured September 4-6: St STEPHEN, King of Hungary: St WILLIAM, Bishop of Roschild, a holy English priest, chaplain to King Canutus; going from England to Denmark with that king, he was moved to stay behind, having pity on the ignorance of the people.

### SEPTEMBER 3

## ST SIMEON STYLITES, THE YOUNGER

(A.D. 592)

[From Evagrius, Hist. lib. v. c. 21, p. 448, and lib. vi. c. 23, p. 471, with the notes of Reading and W. Lowth, *ibid.* Cambridge, 1720; Jos. Assemani, *Comm. in Cal. Univ.*; also Janning, t. v. Maij, p. 298.]

THIS saint was born at Antioch in 512, and retired, when yet a child into the monastery of Thaumastore, or the Admirable Mountain, situated in the deserts of Syria, near Antioch. For several years he served a holy hermit who was a monk of the same place, and lived not far from the

<sup>1</sup> Lib. i. de Servorum Dei Beatific. et Canoniz. c. 41.

community, upon a pillar. Simeon laboured with his whole strength to be a faithful imitator of all his virtues. Meeting one day with a young leopard, and not knowing what it was, he put a rope about its neck, and thus brought it to his master, saying he had found a cat. The good hermit, seeing the furious beast tamely obeying a child, began to conceive greater thoughts of him; and not long after, in 526, having had sufficient experience of his fervour, ordered him to make a pillar and to live upon it. The youth obeyed, as if it had been the voice of God, and lived successively upon two pillars, within the inclosure of the monastery, threescore and eight years, in great austerity, and in the exercises of assiduous contemplation. God manifested his sanctity by a great number of miracles, which he performed chiefly in curing the sick, foretelling things to come, and knowing the most secret thoughts of others. Evagrius, the historian, was an eye-witness to many, and assures us that he had experienced his knowledge of the thoughts of others in himself, when he visited him for spiritual advice. A great concourse of people of all nations, as well Romans as barbarians, resorted to this eminent servant of God, who was honoured by the whole world, particularly by the Emperor Mauritius. When the Samaritans effaced the holy images that were in the churches, St Simeon wrote to the Emperor Justin in defence of the respect which is due to them. This letter is quoted by St John Damascen, and by the second council of Nice. The saint fell ill about the year 592, and Gregory, the patriarch of Antioch, being informed that he was at the point of death, went in all haste to assist at his last moments; but, before he arrived, St Simeon was departed to the Lord. He is honoured by the Greeks on the 24th of May, and by the Latins on the 3rd of September.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 3 :*

THE MOTHER OF THE DIVINE SHEPHERD (in the dioceses of England) : ST MACNISIVS, first Bishop of Connor in Ireland : ST MANSUET, first Bishop of Toul in Lorraine and apostle of that part of Belgic Gaul : ST REMACUS, first Abbot of the monastery and seminary at Solignac and later Bishop of Maestricht : ST SIMEON STYLITES the Younger.

#### SEPTEMBER 4

### SS. MARCELLUS AND VALERIAN, MARTYRS, PATRON SAINTS OF TOURNUS

(A.D. 179)

[From St Gregory of Tours, lib. De Glor. Mart. c. 54, and the Acts of their Martyrdom, inserted in the Chronicle of Tournus, compiled by Falco, monk of that place, in the eleventh age, published by F. Peter Fr. Chifflet, at Dijon, in 1664, in an appendix to his *Histoire de Tournus*.]

ANTONINUS PIUS, and his adopted son and successor, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, surnamed the Philosopher, were renowned for their wisdom, moderation, and attention to the good of the Roman Empire. The latter

is no less admirable for the government of himself, if his meditations are the portraiture of his practice. His virtues and wise administration are represented to advantage by Crevier, but their lustre is not without shades. In the very book of his meditations, where he commends necessary resignation to death, he condemns that of the Christians,<sup>1</sup> which he ascribes to mere obstinacy. Their constancy he had experienced, having raised the fifth general persecution of the church, and published fresh edicts, by which he commanded Christians to be punished with death, as is attested by St Melito, quoted by Eusebius.<sup>2</sup> After his victory over the Quadi and Marcomanni, in 174, he ordered peace to be restored to the Christians, but did not check the fury of the populace, or of particular governors, who, in several places, often availed themselves of former laws made against them.

The horrible massacre of the martyrs at Lyons and Vienna happened in the year 177. In the former of these cities Marcellus and Valerian withdrew themselves from that tempest by a seasonable flight, and preached the gospel in the neighbouring provinces, and were crowned with martyrdom in 179. Marcellus was apprehended in the country near Challons, and, after enduring many torments in that city, was buried alive up to the middle, in which posture he died on the third day, which was the 4th of September. St Valerian fell into the hands of the persecutors near Tournus, a town built on the Saone, between Macon and Challons. After suffering the rack and being torn with iron hooks, he was beheaded at Tournus on the 15th of September. The relics of St Marcellus are honourably kept in the great church which bears his name at Challons, and belongs to a royal monastery, which King Gontran founded in his honour. A church was built at Tournus over the tomb of St Valerian, before the time of St Gregory of Tours.<sup>3</sup> SS. Marcellus and Valerian are honoured as the apostles of that country. The great Abbey of St Valerian at Tournus is the head of a monastic congregation to which it gives its name. It was a small monastery when, in 875, Charles the Bald gave it to the monks of the Isle of Nermoutier, or Ner, or Hero, on the coast of Poitou, who had been expelled by the Normans. They carried with them the relics of St Filibert, or Filbert, their founder. This abbey was rebuilt in 1018, from which time it took the name of St Filbert. In the sixteenth age the Huguenots plundered this church, and burnt part of the relics of St Valerian, but the principal portion escaped their sacrilegious search. The Abbey of Tournus was converted into a college of secular canons in 1627, only the dignity of abbot was retained with an

<sup>1</sup> Medit. lib. xi. c. 3, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> Eus. lib. iv. c. 26; Tillemont, t. iii. Ant. Pagi in Critica Baronii; Ruinart, Præf. in Acta Martyr. et Francisci Balduini Commentarius ad Edicta veterum Principum Rom. de Christianis.

<sup>3</sup> Pet. Fr. Chifflet. Hist. de Tournus, and Abbé Pavillion, Bibliothèque des Auteurs de Bourgogne, 1742.

extensive jurisdiction and large revenue. It was enjoyed *in commendam* by Cardinal Fleury.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 4 :*

THE TRANSLATION OF ST CUTHBERT : ST IDA, widow, who at the court of Charlemagne was ever troubled lest she should be imposed on by the false joys of the world : ST MARCELLUS and ST VALERIAN, martyrs : ST ROSA OF VITERBO, of the Third Order of St Francis : ST ROSALIA, who made herself an abode in a cave : ST ULTAN, first Bishop of Ardbraccan in Meath, whose extensive charity provided for the foundling children in Ireland ; he died in 656.

SEPTEMBER 5

## ST LAURENCE JUSTINIAN, CONFESSOR, FIRST PATRIARCH OF VENICE

(A.D. 1455)

[From his original Life written by his nephew Bernard Justinian, in Bollandus, Jan. 8, and from his Italian Life, elegantly compiled by F. Maffei. See also Helyot, *Hist. des Ord. Relig.* t. ii. p. 359 ; and *Opera St Laurentii Justiniani, Proto-Patriarchæ Venetiarum*, published by F. Nicolas Antony Justiniani, a Benedictin monk, at Venice, in two volumes, 1756.]

ST LAURENCE was born at Venice in 1380. His father, Bernardo Justiniani, held an illustrious rank among the prime nobility of the commonwealth ; nor was the extraction of his mother, Querini, less noble. By the death of Bernardo she was left a disconsolate widow, with a nursery of tender children ; though very young, she thought it her duty to sanctify her soul by the great means and advantages which her state afforded for virtue, and resolutely rejected all thoughts of any more altering her condition. Under her inspection, her children were brought up in the most perfect maxims of Christian piety. Laurence discovered, even from the cradle, an uncommon docility and an extraordinary generosity of soul ; and disdaining to lose any part of his time, loved only serious conversation and employs. His mother, fearing some spark of pride and ambition, chid him sometimes for aiming at things above his age ; but he humbly answered that it was his only desire, by the divine grace, to become a saint.

In the nineteenth year of his age, he was called by God to consecrate himself in a special manner to his service. He seemed one day to see in a vision the eternal wisdom in the disguise and habit of a damsel, shining brighter than the sun, and to hear from her the following words : “ Why seekest thou rest to thy mind out of thyself, sometimes in this object and sometimes in that ? What thou desirest is to be found only with me ; behold, it is in my hands. Seek it in me, who am the wisdom of God. By taking me for thy spouse and thy portion, thou shalt be possessed of its inestimable treasure.” That instant he found his soul so pierced with the charms, incomparable honour, and advantages of this invitation of divine grace that he felt himself inflamed with new ardour to give himself up entirely to the search of the holy knowledge and love of God. A

religious state appeared to him that in which God pointed out to him the path in which he might most securely attain to the great and arduous end which he proposed to himself. But, before he determined himself, he made his application to God by humble prayer, and addressed himself for advice to a holy and learned priest, called Marino Querini, who was his uncle by the mother's side, and a regular canon in the austere congregation of St George, in Alga, established in a little isle which bears that name, situate a mile from the city of Venice, toward the continent. The prudent director, understanding that he was most inclined to a religious state, advised him first to make trial of his strength by inuring himself to the habitual practice of austerities. Laurence readily obeyed, and in the night, leaving his soft bed, lay on knotty sticks on the floor. During this deliberation he one day represented to himself on one side honours, riches, and worldly pleasures, and on the other the hardships of poverty, fasting, watching, and self-denial. Then said to himself, "Hast thou courage, my soul, to despise these delights, and to undertake a life of uninterrupted penance and mortification?" After standing some time in a pause, he cast his eyes on a crucifix, and said, "Thou, O Lord, art my hope. In this tree are found comfort and strength." The ardour of his resolution to walk in the narrow path of the cross showed itself in the extreme severity with which he treated his body, and the continual application of his mind to the exercises of religion. His mother, and other friends, fearing lest his excessive mortifications should prove prejudicial to his health, endeavoured to divert him from that course, and, with this view, contrived a proposal of an honourable match to be made him. The saint perceiving in this stratagem that his friends had entered into a conspiracy to break his measures, fled secretly to the monastery of St George, in Alba, and was admitted to the religious habit.

By the change of his state he found no new austerities which he had not before practised: his superiors even judged it necessary to mitigate the rigours which he exercised upon himself. He was only nineteen years of age, but surpassed, in his watchings and fasts, all his religious brethren. To make a general assault upon sensuality, he never took any useless recreation, subdued his body by severe discipline, and never came near a fire in the sharpest weather of winter, though his hands were often benumbed with cold; he allowed to hunger only what the utmost necessity required, and never drank out of meals; when asked to do it under excessive heats and weariness, he used to say, "If we cannot bear this thirst how shall we endure the fire of purgatory?" From the same heroic disposition proceeded his invincible patience in every kind of sickness. During his novitiate he was afflicted with dangerous scrofulous swellings in his neck. The physicians prescribed cupping, lancing, and searing with fire. Before the operation, seeing others tremble for his

sake, he courageously said to them: "What do you fear? Let the razors and burning irons be brought in. Cannot he grant me constancy who not only supported but even preserved from the flames the three children in the furnace?" Under the cutting and burning he never so much as fetched a sigh, and only once pronounced the holy name of Jesus.

Humiliations he always embraced with singular satisfaction. The meanest and most loathsome offices, and the most tattered habit, were his desire and delight. The beck of any superior was to him as an oracle; even in private conversation he was always ready to yield to the judgment and will of others, and he sought everywhere the lowest place as much as was possible to be done without affectation. When he went about the streets begging alms with a wallet on his back, he often thrust himself into the thickest crowds, and into assemblies of the nobility, that he might meet with derision and contempt. Being one day put in mind that by appearing loaded with his wallet in a certain public place he would expose himself to the ridicule of the company, he answered to his companion, "Let us go boldly in quest of scorn. We have done nothing if we have renounced the world only in words. Let us to-day triumph over it with our sacks and crosses." Nothing is of greater advantage toward gaining a complete victory over ourselves, and the fund of pride which is our greatest obstacle to virtue, than humiliations accepted and borne with cheerfulness and sincere humility. To those which providence daily sends us opportunities of, it is expedient to add some that are voluntary, provided the choice be discreet and accompanied with heroic dispositions of soul, clear of the least tincture of affectation or hypocrisy. Our saint frequently came to beg at the house where he was born, but only stood in the street before the door, crying out, "An alms for God's sake." His mother never failed to be exceedingly moved at hearing his voice, and to order the servants to fill his wallet. But he never took more than two loaves, and wishing peace to those who had done him that charity, departed as if he had been some stranger. The storehouse, in which were laid up the provisions of the community for a year, happening to be burnt down, St Laurence, hearing a certain brother lament for the loss, said cheerfully: "Why have we embraced and vowed poverty? God has granted us this blessing that we may feel it." Whilst he was superior, he was one day rashly accused in chapter of having done something against the rule. The saint could have easily confuted the slander, and given a satisfactory account of his conduct; but he rose instantly from his seat, and walking gently, with his eyes cast down, into the middle of the chapter-room, there fell on his knees, and begged penance and pardon of the fathers. The sight of his astonishing humility covered the accuser with such confusion and shame that he threw himself at the saint's feet, proclaimed him innocent, and loudly condemned himself.

St Laurence so much dreaded the danger of worldly dissipation breaking in upon his solitude that from the day on which he first entered the monastery to that of his death, he never set foot in his father's house, only when with dry eyes he assisted his mother and brothers on their death-beds.

St Laurence was promoted to the priesthood, and the fruit of the excellent spirit of prayer and compunction with which he was endowed was a wonderful experimental knowledge of spiritual things, and of the paths of interior virtue, and a heavenly light and prudence in the direction of souls. The tears, which he abundantly shed at his devotions, especially whilst he offered the adorable sacrifice of the mass, strongly affected all the assistants, and awakened their faith; and the raptures with which he was favoured in prayer were wonderful, especially in saying mass one Christmas night. Much against his inclination he was chosen general of his Order, which he governed with singular prudence and an extraordinary reputation for sanctity. He reformed its discipline in such a manner as to be afterwards regarded as its founder. Even in private conversation he used to give pathetic lessons of virtue, and that sometimes in one short sentence; and such was the unction with which he spoke on spiritual matters in private discourses as to melt the hearts of those who heard him. By his inflamed entertainments he awaked the tepid, filled the presumptuous with saving fear, raised the pusillanimous to confidence, and quickened the fervour of all. It was his usual saying, that a religious man ought to tremble at the very name of the least transgression. He would receive very few into his Order, and these thoroughly tried, saying that a state of such perfections and obligations is only for few, and its essential spirit and fervour are scarce to be maintained in multitudes; yet in these conditions, not in the number of a religious community, its advantages and glory consist. It is not therefore to be wondered at that he was very attentive and rigorous in examining and trying the vocation of postulants. The most sincere and profound humility was the first thing in which he laboured to ground his religious disciples, teaching them that it not only purges the soul of all lurking pride, but also that this alone inspires her with true courage and resolution, by teaching her to place her entire confidence in God alone, the only source of her strength.

The saint never ceased to preach to the magistrates and senators in times of war and all public calamities that, to obtain the divine mercy and the remedy of all the evils with which they were afflicted, they ought, in the first place, to become perfectly sensible that they were nothing; for without this disposition of heart they could never hope for the divine assistance. His confidence in God's infinite goodness and power accordingly kept pace with his humility and entire distrust in himself, and assiduous prayer was his constant support. From the time he was made



priest he never failed saying mass every day, unless he was hindered by sickness; and he used to say that it is a sign of little love if a person does not earnestly endeavour to be united to his Saviour as often as he can. It was a maxim which he frequently repeated, that for a person to pretend to live chaste amid softness, ease, and continual gratifications of sense is as if a man should undertake to quench fire by throwing fuel upon it. He often put the rich in mind that they could not be saved but by abundant almsdeeds. His discourses consisted more of affective amorous sentiments than of studied thoughts; which sufficiently appears from his works.

Pope Eugenius IV, being perfectly acquainted with the eminent virtue of our saint, obliged him to quit his cloister and nominated him to the episcopal see of Venice in 1433. The holy man employed all manner of entreaties and artifices to prevent his elevation, and engaged his whole Order to write in the same strain, in the most pressing manner, to his holiness: but to no effect. When he could no longer oppose the repeated orders of the pope, he acquiesced with many tears; but such was his aversion to pomp and show that he took possession of his church so privately that his own friends knew nothing of the matter till the ceremony was over. The saint passed that whole night in the church at the foot of the altar, pouring forth his soul before God, with many tears; and he spent in the same manner the night which preceded his consecration.

Though he was bishop of so distinguished a see, in the ordering of his household he consulted only piety and humility; and when others told him that he owed some degree of state to his illustrious birth, to the dignity of his church, and to the commonwealth, his answer was, that virtue ought to be the only ornament of the episcopal character, and that all the poor of the diocese composed the bishop's family. His household consisted only of five persons; he had no plate, making use only of earthenware; he lay on a scanty straw-bed covered with a coarse rag, and wore no clothes but his ordinary purple cassock. His example, his severity to himself, and the affability and mildness with which he treated all others, won everyone's heart, and effected with ease the most difficult reformatations which he introduced both among the laity and clergy. The flock loved and respected too much so holy and tender a parent and pastor not to receive all his ordinances with docility and the utmost deference. When any private persons thwarted or opposed his pious designs, he triumphed over their obstinacy by meekness and patience. A certain powerful man, who was exasperated at a mandate the zealous bishop had published against stage entertainments, called him a scrupulous old monk, and endeavoured to stir up the populace against him. Another time an abandoned wretch reproached him in the public streets as a hypocrite. The saint heard them without changing his countenance or altering his pace. He was no less unmoved amidst commendations and applause. By the very first visitation

which he made the face of his whole diocese was changed. He founded fifteen religious houses and a great number of churches, and reformed those of all his diocese, especially with regard to the most devout manner of performing the divine office and the administration of the sacraments. Such was the good order and devotion that he established in his cathedral that it was a model to all Christendom. St Laurence founded several new canonries in it, and also in many other churches; and he increased the number of parishes in the city of Venice from twenty to thirty.

It is incredible what crowds every day resorted to the holy bishop's palace for advice, comfort, or alms; his gate, pantry, and coffers were always open to the poor. He gave alms more willingly in bread and clothes than in money, which might be ill spent; when he gave money it was always in small sums. He employed pious matrons to find out and relieve the bashful poor, or persons of family in decayed circumstances. In the distribution of his charities he had no regard to flesh and blood. When a poor man came to him, recommended by his brother, Leonard, he said to him, "Go to him who sent you, and tell him from me that he is able to relieve you himself." No man ever had a greater contempt for money than our saint. He committed the care of his temporals to a faithful steward, and used to say that it is an unworthy thing for a pastor of souls to spend much of his precious time in casting up farthings.

The popes held St Laurence in great veneration. Eugenius IV having ordered our holy bishop to give him a meeting once at Bologna, saluted him in these words: "Welcome, the ornament of bishops." His successor, Nicholas V, earnestly sought an opportunity of giving him some singular token of particular esteem; when Dominic Michelli, patriarch of Grado, happened to die in 1451, his holiness, barely in consideration of the saint, transferred the patriarchal dignity to the see of Venice. Whilst this affair was debated in the senate-house, St Laurence repaired thither and, being admitted, humbly declared his sincere and earnest desire of rather resigning a charge for which he was most unfit and which he had borne against his will eighteen years, than to feel his burden increased by this additional dignity. His humility and charity so strongly affected the whole senate that the doge himself was not able to refrain from tears, and cried out to the saint, conjuring him not to entertain such a thought or to raise any obstacle to the pope's decree, which was expedient to the church and most honourable to their country.

St Laurence, after this new exaltation, considered himself as bound by a new tie to exert his utmost strength in labouring for the advancement of the divine honour and the sanctification of all the souls committed to his care. His advice was always satisfactory and healing to the various distempers of the human mind; and such was the universal opinion of his virtue, prudence, penetration, and judgment that causes decided by him

were never admitted to a second hearing at Rome, but in all appeals his sentence was forthwith confirmed. Grounded in the most sincere and perfect contempt of himself, he seemed insensible and dead to the flattering temptation of human applause, which appeared to have no other effect upon him than to make him more profoundly to humble himself in his own soul and before both God and men. When he was not able to refrain his tears, which proceeded from the tenderness and vehemence of the divine love, and from the wonderful spirit of compunction with which he was endowed, he used to accuse himself of weakness and too tender and compassionate a disposition of mind. But these he freely indulged at his private devotions, and by them he purified his affections more and more from earthly things, and moved the divine mercy to shower down the greatest blessings on others.

The republic was at that time shaken with violent storms and threatened with great dangers. A holy hermit, who had served God with great fervour above thirty years in the isle of Corfu, assured a Venetian nobleman, as if it were from a divine revelation, that the city and republic of Venice had been preserved by the prayers of the good bishop. The saint's nephew, who has accurately wrote his life in an elegant and pure style, mentions several miracles wrought by him, and certain prophecies of which he was himself witness. It appeared, in many instances, how perfectly the saint was mortified in his senses. A servant presenting him vinegar one day at table instead of wine and water, he drank it without saying a word. Out of love for holy poverty, in order to disengage his heart from the things of this world, he never had any books bound, but only sewed.

St Laurence was seventy-four years old when he wrote his last work, entitled "The Degrees of Perfection"; he had just finished it when he was seized with a sharp fever. In his illness his servants prepared a bed for him, at which the true imitator of Christ was troubled and said, "Are you laying a feather-bed for me?—no, that shall not be. My Lord was stretched on a hard and painful tree. Do not you remember that St Martin said in his agony that a Christian ought to die on sackcloth and ashes?" Nor could he be contented till he was laid on his straw. He forbade his friends to weep for him, and often cried out in raptures of joy, "Behold the Spouse! let us go forth and meet him." He added, with his eyes lifted up to heaven, "Good Jesus, behold I come." At other times, weighing the divine judgments, he expressed sentiments of holy fear. One saying to him that he might go joyfully to his crown, he was much disturbed and said, "The crown is for valiant soldiers, not for base cowards such as I am." During the two days that he survived, after receiving extreme unction, the whole city came in turns, according to their different ranks, to receive his blessing. The saint would have even the beggars admitted, and gave to each class some short pathetic instruction. Seeing one

Marcellus, a very pious young nobleman who was his favourite disciple, weep most bitterly, he comforted him, giving him the following assurance, "I go before, but you will shortly follow me. Next Easter we shall again meet in mutual embraces." Marcellus fell sick in the beginning of Lent and was buried in Easter-week. St Laurence, closing his eyes, calmly expired on the 8th of January, in the year 1455, being seventy-four years old, having been honoured with the episcopal dignity twenty-two years, and four with that of patriarch. During the contestation about the place of his burial, his body was preserved entire without the least ill savour or sign of corruption sixty-seven days, and interred, according to a decree of the senate, on the 17th of March. The ceremony of his beatification was performed by Clement VII in 1524, and that of his canonization by Alexander VIII in 1690. His festival is kept on the 5th of September, the day on which he was consecrated bishop.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 5 :*

ST ALTO of Ireland, a Scottish monk who travelled into Germany, working many miracles : ST BERTIN, a model of monastic perfection : ST LAURENCE JUSTINIAN, first Patriarch of Venice, a title retained by his successors.

## SEPTEMBER 6

### ST PAMBO OF NITRIA, ABBOT

(A.D. 385)

[From Palladius in Lausiac ; Rufin, Hist. Patr. Sozomen, Cotelier Apoth. Patr. pp. 637, 641 and 628. See Tillemont, t. viii. p. 445.]

ST PAMBO betook himself in his youth to the great St Antony in the desert, and, desiring to be admitted among his disciples, begged he would give him some lessons for his conduct. The great patriarch of the ancient monks told him he must take care always to live in a state of penance and compunction for his sins, must perfectly divest himself of all self-conceit, and never place the least confidence in himself or in his own righteousness; must watch continually over himself and study to act in everything in such a manner as to have no occasion afterwards to repent of what he had done, and that he must labour to put a restraint upon his tongue and his appetite. The disciple set himself earnestly to learn the practice of all these lessons. The mortification of gluttony was usually laid down by the fathers as one of the first steps towards bringing the senses and the passions into subjection; this, consisting in something that is exterior and sensible, its practice is more obvious, yet of great importance towards the reduction of all the sensual appetites of the mind, whose revolt was begun by the intemperance and disobedience of our first parents. Fasting is also, by the divine appointment, a duty of the exterior part of our penance. St Pambo excelled most other ancient monks in the austerity of his continual fasts.

The government of his tongue was no less an object of his watchfulness than that of his appetite. A certain religious brother to whom he had applied for advice began to recite to him the thirty-eighth psalm, "I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue"; which words Pambo had no sooner heard, but without waiting for the second verse he returned to his cell saying that was enough for one lesson, and that he would go and study to put it in practice.

By his perpetual attention not to offend in his words, he arrived at so great a perfection in this particular that he was thought to have equalled, if not to have excelled St Antony himself; and his answers were seasoned with so much wisdom and spiritual prudence that they were received by all as if they had been oracles dictated by heaven. Abbot Pœmen said of our saint, "Three exterior practices are remarkable in Abbot Pambo; his fasting every day till evening, his silence, and his great diligence in manual labour."<sup>1</sup> St Antony inculcated to all his disciples the obligation of assiduity in constant manual labour in a solitary life, both as a part of penance and a necessary means to expel sloth, and entertain the vigour of the mind in spiritual exercises. This lesson was confirmed to him by his own experience, and by a heavenly vision related in the lives of the fathers as follows: "Abbot Antony, as he was sitting in the wilderness, fell into a grievous temptation of spiritual sadness, importunate thoughts, and interior darkness; and he said to God, Lord, I desire to be saved, but my thoughts are an hindrance to me. What shall I do in my present affliction? How shall I be saved? Soon after, he rose up and going out of his cell, saw a man sitting and working; then rising from his work to pray; afterwards sitting down again and twisting his cord; after this rising to prayer. He understood this to be an angel sent by God to teach him what he was to do, and he heard the angel say to him, Do so, and thou shalt be saved." Hereat the abbot was filled with joy and confidence, and by this means he cheerfully persevered to the end.<sup>2</sup> St Pambo most rigorously observed this rule, and feared to lose one moment of his precious time. Out of love of humiliations and a fear of the danger of vainglory and pride, he made it his earnest prayer for three years that God would not give him glory before men, but rather contempt. Nevertheless, God glorified him in this life, but made him by his grace to learn more perfectly to humble himself amidst applause. The eminent grace which replenished his soul showed itself in his exterior by a certain air of majesty and a kind of light which shone on his countenance, like what we read of Moses, so that a person could not look steadfastly on his face. St Antony, who admired the purity of his soul and his mastery over his passions, used to say that his fear of God had moved the divine Spirit to take up his resting-place in him.

St Pambo, after he left St Antony, settled in the desert of Nitria, on

<sup>1</sup> Cotel. Apothegm. p. 628, n. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. n. 1, p. 300

a mountain where he had a monastery; but he lived some time in the wilderness of the Cells, where Rufinus says he went to receive his blessing in the year 374. St Melania the Elder, in the visit she made to the holy solitaries who inhabited the deserts of Egypt, coming to St Pambo's monastery on Mount Nitria, found the holy abbot sitting at his work making mats. She gave him three hundred pounds weight of silver, desiring him to accept that part of her store for the necessities of the poor among the brethren. St Pambo, without interrupting his work, or looking at her or her present, said to her that God would reward her charity. Then turning to his disciple he bade him take the silver and distribute it among all the brethren in Lybia and the isles who were most needy, but charged him to give nothing to those of Egypt, that country being rich and plentiful. Melania continued some time standing, and at length said, "Father, do you know that here is three hundred pounds weight of silver?" The abbot, without casting his eye upon the chest of silver, replied, "Daughter, he to whom you made this offering very well knows how much it weighs without being told. If you give it to God, who did not despise the widow's two mites, and even preferred them to the great presents of the rich, say no more about it." This Melania herself related to Palladius.<sup>1</sup> St Athanasius once desired St Pambo to come out of the desert to Alexandria, to confound the Arians by giving testimony to the divinity of Jesus Christ. Our saint, seeing in that city an actress dressed up for the stage, wept bitterly; and being asked the reason of his tears, said he wept for the sinful condition of that unhappy woman, and also for his own sloth in the divine service, because he did not take so much pains to please God as she did to ensnare men.<sup>2</sup> When Abbot Theodore begged of St Pambo some words of instruction, "Go," said he, "and exercise mercy and charity towards all men. Mercy finds confidence before God." To the priest of Nitria, who asked him how the brethren ought to live, he said, "They must live in constant labour and the exercise of all virtues, watching to preserve their conscience free from stain, especially from giving scandal or offence to any neighbour." St Pambo said, a little before his death, "From the time that I came into this desert and built myself a cell in it, I do not remember that I have ever ate any bread but what I had earned by my own labour, nor that I ever spoke any word of which I afterwards repented; nevertheless, I go to God as one who has not yet begun to serve him."<sup>3</sup> He died seventy years old, without any sickness, pain, or agony, as he was making a basket, which he bequeathed to Palladius, who was at that time his disciple, the holy man having nothing else to give him.<sup>4</sup> Melania took care of his burial, and, having obtained this basket, kept it to her dying day. St Pambo is commemorated by the Greeks on several days. It was

<sup>1</sup> Pallad. Lausiaca. c. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Cotel. Apothegm. p. 640, n. 2

<sup>3</sup> Socrat. lib. iv. c. 23; Cotel. Apothegm. p. 639, n. 4

<sup>4</sup> Pallad. in Lausiaca. ib.

a usual saying of this great director of souls in the rules of Christian perfection, "If you have a heart, you may be saved."<sup>1</sup>

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 6 :*

ST BEGA or BEES, an Irish virgin, founded a nunnery near Carlisle in the middle of the seventh century : ST ELEUTHERIUS, Abbot, ever distinguished by a wonderful simplicity and favoured with the gift of miracles : ST MACCULINDUS, commemorated in the Irish calendar, Bishop of Lusk, died in 497 : and ST PAMBO of NITRIA, who in youth betook himself to the great St Antony in the desert. He was perpetually attentive not to offend God in his words.

## SEPTEMBER 7

### ST CLOUD, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 560)

[From St Gregory of Tours, Hist. Fr. lib. iii. c. 11 and 18 ; and from the Life of this saint, with the remarks of Mabillon, Sæc. Ben. 3, p. 136. See Abbé Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, t. vii. an. 1757 ; Stilling, t. iii. Sept. p. 91.]

ST CLOUD, called in Latin Chlodoardus, is the first and most illustrious saint among the princes of the royal family of the first race in France. He was son of Chlodomir, King of Orleans, the eldest son of St Clotilda, and was born in 522. He was scarce three years old when his father was killed in Burgundy in 524 ; but his grandmother Clotilda brought up him and his two brothers, Theobald and Gunthaire, at Paris, and loved them extremely. Their ambitious uncles, Childebert, King of Paris, and Clotaire, King of Soissons, divided the kingdom of Orleans betwixt them, and stabbed with their own hands the two elder of their nephews, Theobald and Gunthaire, the former being ten, the latter seven years old. Cloud, by a special providence, was saved from the massacre, and cut off his hair with his own hands, by that ceremony renouncing the world and devoting himself entirely to the service of God in a monastic state. He had many fair opportunities of recovering his father's kingdom ; but, young as he was, he saw by the light of grace that all that appears most dazzling in worldly greatness is no better than smoke, and that a Christian gains infinitely more by losing than by possessing it. In the true estimation of things, he most emphatically deserves to be styled a king who is master of himself and has learned the art of ruling those passions to which kings are often miserably enslaved. His contempt of all earthly things increased in proportion as he advanced in virtue and heavenly light.

After some time he removed from his first abode to put himself under the discipline of St Severinus, a holy recluse who lived near Paris, from whose hands he received the monastic habit. Under this experienced master the fervent novice made great progress in Christian perfection ; but the neighbourhood of Paris being a trouble to him who desired nothing so much as to live unknown to the world, he withdrew secretly to Provence, where he passed several years and wrought many miracles. Seeing he gained nothing

<sup>1</sup> Cotel. ib. n. 90, p. 640.

by the remoteness of his solitude, after his hermitage was once made public by many resorting to him, he at length returned to Paris and was received with the greatest joy imaginable. At the earnest request of the people he was ordained priest by Eusebius, Bishop of Paris, in 551, and served that church some time in the functions of the sacred ministry. He afterwards retired to Nogent, on the Seine, now called St Cloud, two leagues below Paris, where he built a monastery dependent on the church of Paris. In this monastery he assembled many pious men, who fled out of the world for fear of losing their souls in it. St Cloud was regarded by them as their superior, and he animated them to all virtue both by word and example. All his inheritance he bestowed on churches or distributed among the poor; the village of Nogent he settled on the episcopal see of Paris, as is mentioned in the letters patent, by which this place was erected into a duchy and peerage in favour of the archbishop.<sup>1</sup> St Cloud was indefatigable in instructing and exhorting the people of the neighbouring country, and piously ended his days at Nogent about the year 560. He is commemorated in the Roman Martyrology on the 7th of September, which seems to have been the day of his death. The monastery has been since changed into a collegiate church of canons, where the relics of the saint are still kept and the place bears his name.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 7 :*

ST ALCHMUND and ST TILBERT, both Bishops of Hexham : ST CLOUD, the first and most illustrious saint among the royal family of France : ST EUNAN, Bishop of Raphoe : ST EVURTUS, Bishop of Orleans in the reign of Constantine the Great : ST GRIMONIA or GERMANA, an Irish maiden, martyred in defence of her chastity, in Picardy ; famed for miracles after her death and honoured with ST PROBA, her fellow-martyr : THE BLESSED JOHN DUCKETT, priest, and THE BLESSED RALPH CORBIE, S.J., English martyrs, beatified Dec. 15, 1929 : ST MADELBERT, Abbess, niece to St Aldegundis, whom she succeeded : and ST REGINA, called in France ST REINE, beheaded for the faith at Aliza.

## SEPTEMBER 8

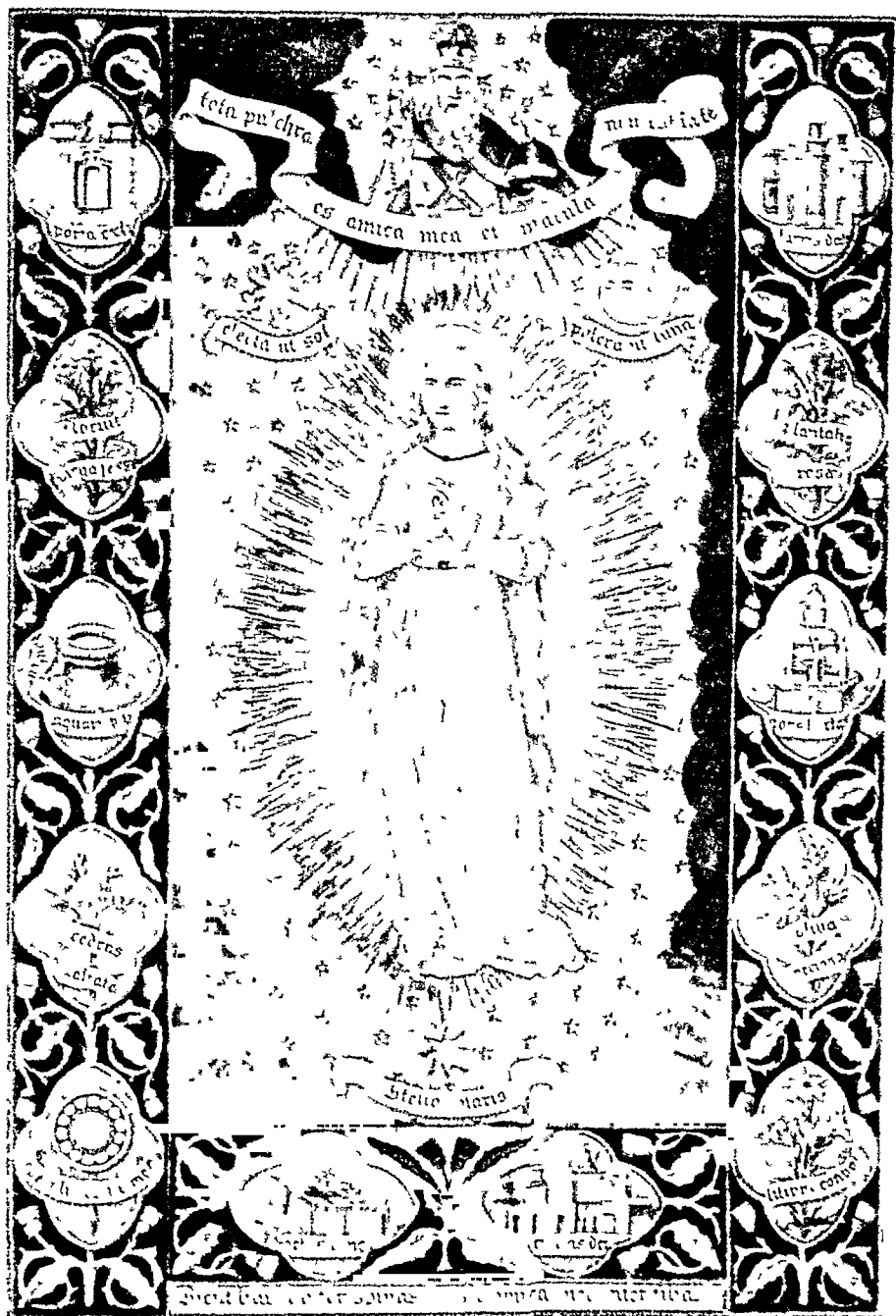
### THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

THE birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary announced joy and the near approach of salvation to the lost world : therefore is this festival celebrated by the church with praise and thanksgiving. It was a mystery of sanctity and distinguished by singular privileges. Mary was brought forth into the world, not like other children of Adam, infected with the loathsome contagion of sin, but pure, holy, beautiful, and glorious, adorned with all the most precious graces, which became her who was chosen to be the Mother of God. She appeared indeed in the weak state of our mortality ; but in the eyes of heaven, she already transcended the highest seraph in purity, brightness, and the richest ornaments of grace. " I am black, but beautiful, O ye daughters of Jerusalem." <sup>2</sup> The spouse says to her much more

<sup>1</sup> See Abbé Lebeuf, Hist, du Diocèse de Paris, t. vii.

<sup>2</sup> Cant. i. 4.





## THE BLESSED VIRGIN

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"Thou art all beautiful my beloved and there is no stain in thee. Bright as the sun, fair as the moon Like a lily among thorns—so is my beloved among the daughters of Jerusalem." With praise and thanksgiving the Church celebrates the birthday of Our Lady each year

emphatically than to other souls sanctified by his choicest graces, "As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters."<sup>1</sup> Thou art all fair, and there is not a spot in thee?"<sup>2</sup> Man was no sooner fallen in paradise through the woman seduced by the infernal spirit, but God promised another woman whose seed should crush that serpent's head. "I will put enmities," said he to the serpent, "between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel."<sup>3</sup> This curse is evidently to be understood of the devil who seduced Eve, and with implacable malice sought the destruction of her posterity. It is not the real serpent that is here meant; the sense would be too low: and why should the serpent, which was not in fault, be so treated and the true offender, the devil, who had either taken the figure of the crafty serpent, or concealed himself in that reptile, escape all punishment? The Hebrew original expresses the latter part of the prophecy as follows: "It (*i.e.* her seed) shall crush thy head."<sup>4</sup> In the birth of the Virgin Mary was the accomplishment of this solemn prediction begun.

To understand the great present that in her God bestowed on the world, we must consider her transcendent dignity, and the singular privileges by which she was distinguished above all other pure creatures. Her dignity is expressed by the evangelist when he says, "That of her was born Jesus, who is called the Christ."<sup>5</sup> From this text alone is that article of the Catholic faith sufficiently evinced, that she is truly Mother of God. It is clear this is not to be understood as if she could be in any sense mother of the Divinity, the very thought whereof would imply contradiction and blasphemy, but by reason that she conceived and brought forth that Blessed Man who, subsisting by the second divine person of the adorable Trinity, is consequently the natural, not the adoptive Son of God, which was the Semi-Nestorian error broached by Felix and Elipandus. In the Incarnation the human nature of Christ was assumed by, and hypostatically, that is, intimately and substantially, united to the person of God the Son, so that the actions done by this nature are the actions of that Divine Person, whose assumed or appropriated nature this is. Hence we truly say with St Paul that we are redeemed by the blood of a God, and with the church that God was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered and died on the cross; all which he did in that human nature which he had wonderfully taken upon him.

The dignity of Mother of God is the highest to which any mere creature is capable of being raised. What closer alliance could any pure creature have with the Creator of all things? What name could be more noble, what prerogative more singular, or more wonderful? He who was born of the Father from all eternity, the only-begotten and consubstantial Son, Maker and Lord of all things, is born in time, and receives a being in his

<sup>1</sup> Cant. ii. 2.<sup>2</sup> Cant. iv. 7.<sup>3</sup> Gen. iii. 15.<sup>4</sup> See Houbigand, t. i. p. 150; also A. Lap. ib., and Bp. Sherlock, on Prophecy<sup>5</sup> Matt. i. 16

nature of man from Mary. "Listen and attend, O man," cries out St Anselm,<sup>1</sup> "and be transported in an ecstasy of astonishment, contemplating this prodigy. The infinite God had one only-begotten co-eternal Son: yet he would not suffer him to remain only his own, but would also have him to be made the only son of Mary." And St Bernard says,<sup>2</sup> "Choose which you will most admire, the most beneficent condescension of the Son, or the sublime dignity of the Mother."

To take a review of some other singular privileges of this glorious creature we must further consider that she is both a mother and a spotless virgin. This is the wonderful prerogative of Mary alone; a privilege and honour reserved to her, which shall not be given to any other, says St Bernard.

The perpetual virginity of the Mother of God has been denied by several heretics. Ebion and Cerinthus had the insolence to advance that she had other children before Jesus: but this impious error is condemned by all who receive the holy gospels, by which it is manifest that Jesus is the first-born. In the fourth age Elvidius, and soon after him Jovinian, pretended she had other children after Christ. Jovinian, and among modern Protestants, Beza, Albertin, and Basnage,<sup>3</sup> will not allow her the title of Virgin in the birth of Christ. Against these errors the Catholic church has always inviolably maintained that she was a Virgin before, in, and after his birth; when she is styled "ever Virgin." This article is defended in all its points by St Jerom,<sup>4</sup> St Epiphanius,<sup>5</sup> and other fathers. St Jerom shows that the expression of the evangelist, that Joseph "knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born,"<sup>6</sup> no ways intimates that he knew her afterwards, as no one will infer that because God says, "I am till you grow old," he should then cease to be, &c. The same father proves that first-born in the sacred writings means the first son, whether any other children followed or no; and that those who were called the brothers of our Lord according to the Hebrew phrase were only cousins-german, sons of another Mary, called of Alphæus and of Cleophas, sister to the Blessed Virgin. He confirms the belief of her perpetual virginity from the testimony of St Ignatius, St Polycarp, St Irenæus, St Justin, &c. St Epiphanius further observes that no one ever named Mary without adding the title of Virgin; and that had she had other children, Jesus would not have recommended her on the cross to St John, &c. Her virginity was not only a miraculous privilege but also a voluntary virtue, she having, by an early vow, consecrated her chastity to God, as the fathers infer from her answer to the angel.<sup>7</sup> Such a privileged mother became the Son of God.

<sup>1</sup> St Anselm Monol.

<sup>2</sup> Hom. 1. super Missus est. See also St Bonaventure, Spec. B. Virginis, c. 8.

<sup>3</sup> See Basnage, Annal. t. i. p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. Contra. Helvid., &c.

<sup>5</sup> Hær. 78. See on each part Nat. Alex. Hist. Eccles. Witasæ and Tournely, Tr. de Incarn., &c.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. i. 25.

<sup>7</sup> St Jerom lib. adv. Helvid.; St Ambr. lib. ii. in Luc. pp. 14, 15; St Austin, &c.

The earth, defiled by the abominations of impurity, was loaded with the curses of God, who said, "My spirit shall not remain in man for ever, because he is flesh."<sup>1</sup> But God choosing Mary to take himself flesh of, prepared her for that dignity by her spotless virginity, and on account of that virtue said to her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee."<sup>2</sup> It is by imitating her perfect purity according to our state that we shall recommend ourselves to our heavenly spouse, who is the lover of chaste souls, and is called by St Gregory Nazianzen the virgin by excellence and the first of virgins. In the example and patronage of Mary we have a powerful succour against the opposite most abominable and destroying vice.

The Virgin Mary was the most perfect model of all other virtues. St Ambrose, in the beginning of his second book, "On Virginity," exhorts virgins in particular to make her life the rule of their conduct: "Let the life and virginity of Mary," says he, "be set before you as in a looking-glass, in which is seen the pattern of chastity and virtue. The first spur to imitation is the nobility of the master. What more noble than the Mother of God!—she was a virgin in body and mind, whose candour was incapable of deceit or disguise: humble in heart; grave in words; wise in her resolutions. She spoke seldom and little; read assiduously, and placed her confidence, not in inconstant riches, but in the prayers of the poor. Being always employed with fervour, she would have no other witness of her heart but God alone, to whom she referred herself and all things she did or possessed. She injured no one, was beneficent to all, honoured her superiors, envied not equals, shunned vainglory, followed reason, ardently loved virtue. Her looks were sweet, her discourse mild, her behaviour modest. Her actions had nothing unbecoming, her gait nothing of levity, her voice nothing of overbearing assurance. Her exterior was so well regulated that in her body was seen a picture of her mind and an accomplished model of all virtues. Her charities knew no bounds; temperate in her diet, she prolonged her fasts several days, and the most ordinary meats were her choice, not to please the taste, but to support nature. The moments which we pass in sleep were to her a time for the sweetest exercises of devotion. It was not her custom to go out of doors, except to the temple, and this always in the company of her relations," &c. The humble and perfect virtue of Mary raised in St Joseph the highest opinion of her sanctity, as appeared when he saw her with child. "This is a testimony of the sanctity of Mary," says St Jerom,<sup>3</sup> "that Joseph knowing her chastity, and admiring what had happened, suppresses in silence a mystery which he did not understand." Another ancient writer improves the same remark, crying out,<sup>4</sup> "Oh, inestimable commendation

<sup>1</sup> Gen. vi.<sup>2</sup> Luke i. 35.<sup>3</sup> St Hier. in c. i, Matt.<sup>4</sup> Op. imp. in Matt. c. i, apud St Chrysost.

of Mary! Joseph rather believed her virtue than her womb, and grace rather than nature. He thought it more possible that Mary should have conceived by miracle without a man than that she should have sinned." Yet this sanctity of Mary, which was a subject of admiration to the highest heavenly spirits, consisted chiefly in ordinary actions, and in the purity of heart and the fervour with which she performed them. "All her glory is from within!"<sup>1</sup> From her we learn that our spiritual perfection is to be sought in our own state, and depends very much upon the manner in which we perform our ordinary actions. True virtue loves to do all things in silence, and with as little show and noise as may be; it studies to avoid whatever would recommend it to the eyes of men, desiring to have no other witnesses but him who is its rewarder, and whose glory alone it seeks. A virtue which wants a trumpet to proclaim it, or which affects only public, singular, or extraordinary actions, is to be suspected of subtle pride, vanity, and self-love.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 8 :*

THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED LADY: THE HOLY NAME OF MARY (on the Sunday within the octave of her nativity): ST ADRIAN, an officer of the Roman army who, having persecuted the Christians, was moved by their constancy to join them; he died gloriously for the faith, 306: ST CORBINIAN, a native of France, lived as a recluse for seven years; later made Bishop of Frisingen in Upper Bavaria: ST DISEN or DISIBODE, an Irish monk who laboured in France and in Germany, teaching many to walk in the narrow way of Christian perfection: ST EUSEBIUS, ST NESTORIUS, ST ZENO, and ST NESTOR, martyrs in the time of Julian the Apostate: ST SIDRONIUS, crowned with martyrdom at Rome in the persecution of Aurelius.

## SEPTEMBER 9

### ST GORGONIUS, ST DOROTHEUS, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS (A.D. 304)

[From Lact. lib. de Mort. Persec. et lib. vi. Instit. ; Euseb. lib. viii.]

DOROTHEUS was first chamberlain to the Emperor Diocletian; Gorgonius and Peter were under chamberlains. They were the three principal eunuchs of the palace; had sometimes borne the weight of the most difficult affairs of state, and been the support both of the emperor and of his court. When the palace of Nicomedia was set on fire, probably by the contrivance of Galerius, who unjustly charged the Christians with it, Dorotheus, with Gorgonius and several others under his dependence, were very cruelly tortured, and at length strangled. Peter, having refused to sacrifice, was hung up naked in the air and whipped on all parts of his body. After the executioners had torn his flesh in such a manner that the bones started out, without being able to shake his constancy, they poured salt and vinegar into his wounds; then had a gridiron brought and a fire made, on which they broiled him as we do meat, telling him at the same time that

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xliv. 14.

he should continue in that condition if he would not obey; but he was resolute to the last and died under the torture. The bodies of St Dorotheus and his companions were cast into the sea by an order of Diocletian, lest the Christians should worship them as gods, as Eusebius mentions: which mistake of the heathens could only arise from the veneration which Christians paid to the relics of martyrs. The martyr, Gorgonius, whose name was famous at Rome, seems different from the former. The Liberian Calendar published by Bucherius mentions his tomb on the Lavican Way, and he was honoured with an office in the sacramentary of Pope Gelasius. Sigebert, in his chronicle on the year 764, Rabanus Maurus in his Martyrology, and others, relate that St Chrodegang obtained from Rome, of Pope Paul, the relics of St Gorgonius, and enriched with that treasure his great monastery of Gorze, situated two leagues from Metz. Among the poems of Pope Damasus is an epitaph on St Gorgonius.<sup>1</sup>

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 9 :*

ST BETTELIN or BECCELIN, hermit, who served St Guthlac and was " of all others most dear to him " : ST KIARIN or KIERIN, Abbot, converted by hearing a passage from the gospel read in church ; ST FINIAN foretold that half the monasteries in Ireland would receive a rule from him : ST GORGONIUS, ST DOROTHEUS, and COMPANIONS, martyrs : ST OMER, Bishop : ST OSMANNA, virgin : ST PETER CLAVER, S.J., the apostle of the negroes, whose humility drew down great blessings upon his missionary work against vice and error.

SEPTEMBER 10

## ST NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINO, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 1306)

[His life was written by several hands, principally by three pious and learned men of his Order very soon after his death : viz. Peter de Monte Rubiano in the Marca of Ancona ; secondly, by Henry of Urimaria ; thirdly, by Jordan de Saxonia. See also Nævius, in his Eremus Augustiniana, p. 166 ; Brulius, *Historiæ Peruianæ ordinis Eremitarum St Augustini*, lib. 15 ; and Suysken, Act. SS. t. iii. Sept. p. 636.]

THIS saint received his surname from the town which was his fixed residence for the most considerable part of his life, and in which he died. He was a native of St Angelo, a town near Fermo, in the Marca of Ancona, and was born about the year 1245. His parents were of mean condition in the world, but rich in virtue, and he was reputed the fruit of their prayers and a devout pilgrimage to the shrine of St Nicholas of Bari, in which his mother especially, who was then stricken in years, had earnestly begged of God a son who should faithfully serve him. At his baptism he received the name of his patron, and appeared by his towardly disposition from his infancy to be prevented by an extraordinary share of divine grace. In his childhood he spent whole hours together at his prayers with wonderful application of his mind to God, and he heard the divine word with the utmost eagerness, and with a modesty which charmed all who saw him. He had a tender love for the poor, and used to conduct home those that he met,

<sup>1</sup> Damas. Carm. 14, p. 156.

in order to divide with them whatever he had for his own subsistence. From his infancy he made it a cardinal maxim to renounce all superfluities, practised great mortifications, and from his tender age contracted a habit of fasting three days a week, namely, on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, to which, when he was grown up, he added Mondays, allowing himself on these days only one refection, and that of bread and water. From his very infancy he seemed exempt from the weaknesses and passions to which children are generally liable, his greatest pleasure was in reading good books, in his devotions, and in pious conversation, and his heart was always in the church. His parents neglected nothing that was in their power to improve his genius and happy dispositions. In his studies, as his parts were quick, his apprehensions lively, and his memory and judgment strong, so his progress was rapid.

He was yet a young student when, for his extraordinary merit, he was preferred to a canonry in our Saviour's church. This situation was extremely agreeable to his inclination, as by it he was always employed in the divine service. But he aspired to a state which would allow him to consecrate his whole time and thoughts directly to God, without interruptions or avocations. Whilst he was in this disposition, a sermon, preached by an Austin friar or hermit, on the vanity of the world determined him to take a resolution absolutely to quit the world and to embrace the Order of that holy preacher. This he executed without loss of time, entering himself a religious man in the convent of that Order of Tolentino, a small town in the ecclesiastical state. He went through his novitiate under the direction of the preacher himself, and made his profession before he had completed the eighteenth year of his age.

He was sent successively to several convents of his Order at Recanati, Macerata, and others; in that of Cingole he was ordained priest by the Bishop of Osimo. From which time, if he seemed an angel in his other actions, he appeared like a seraph at the altar; so wonderfully did the divine fire which burned in his breast manifest itself in his countenance, and sweet tears flowed in streams from his eyes. Devout persons strove every day to assist at his mass as at a sacrifice offered by the hands of a saint. In the secret communications which passed between his pure soul and God in contemplation, especially after he had been employed at the altar or in the confessional, he seemed already to enjoy a kind of anticipation of the delights of heaven. The last thirty years of his life he resided at Tolentino, and his zeal for the salvation of souls produced their wonderful fruit. He preached almost every day, and his sermons were always signalized by remarkable conversions. His exhortations, whether in the confessional or in giving catechism, were always such as reached to the heart and left lasting salutary impressions on those that heard him. What time could be spared from those charitable functions he spent in prayer



## SAINT NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINO

When he was still quite a small boy Nicholas liked to hide in a cave outside the town and pretend he was a holy hermit. As soon as he was old enough he joined the Augustinian friars, and the picture shows him, in his habit, curing a sick child. In desperation, the poor mother had brought her dying baby to Nicholas who cured him with the words, "The good God will heal you." Many other miracles are attributed to this gentle saint who counted the beggars among his best friends.

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and contemplation. He was favoured with visions and wrought several miraculous cures. For the exercise of his virtue he was long afflicted with divers painful distempers. His holy death happened on the 10th of September in 1306, and he was canonized by Eugenius IV in 1446. His body was buried in the church of his convent at Tolentino, in a chapel in which he used to say mass, and his tomb there is held in veneration.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 10 :*

THE BLESSED CHARLES SPINOLA, S.J., martyr : ST FINIAN, called WININ by the Welsh, born in Ireland early in the sixth century : ST MACANISIUS, in the diocese of Connor : SAINTS NEMECIANUS, FELIX, LUCIUS, JADER, DAVITUS, and another FELIX, with many priests, deacons, and others, part martyrs and part confessors in Numidia, to whom St Cyprian wrote brave and inspiring words from his place of banishment : ST NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINO : ST PULCHERIA, Empress, from whose throne "virtue shone in the brightest lustre" : and ST SALVIUS, Bishop.

## SEPTEMBER 11

### ST PROTUS AND ST HYACINTHUS, MARTYRS

THE saints whose victory the church commemorates on this day are honoured among the most illustrious martyrs that ennobled Rome with their blood when the emperors of the world attempted, with the whole weight of their power, to crush the little flock of Christ. Their epitaph, among the works of Pope Damasus, calls them brothers, and informs us that Hyacinthus sustained the first conflict, but that Protus obtained his crown before him. They are said, in the Acts of St Eugenia, to have been eunuchs and retainers to that virtuous lady and martyr, who is honoured on the 25th of December. Their martyrdom, and that of Eugenia, is placed in these acts under Valerian in 257; but the Liberian Calendar assures us that St Basilla, who seems to have been a companion of St Eugenia, received her crown on the 22nd of September in the persecution of Diocletian in 304, and was buried on the Salarian Way. St Avitus of Vienne, about the year 500, Fortunatus and others make mention of St Eugenia among the most celebrated virgins and martyrs.<sup>1</sup> The ancient calendar, drawn up in the pontificate of Liberius, mentions the festival of SS. Protus and Hyacinthus on the 11th of September, as celebrated at their tomb on the Salarian Way, in the cemetery of Basilla, who lay buried at some distance. Her name ought rather to be written Bassilla, as it is in the Liberian Calendar; for it is derived from Bassus. This cemetery was afterwards comprised under that of St Priscilla, who was buried not far off on the new Salarian Way.<sup>2</sup> SS. Protus and Hyacinthus are honoured in the Sacramentary of St Gregory, in the ancient Martyrology, published by F. Fronto, and in those of Bede, Usuard, Vandelbert, &c. Pope Damasus, in 336, removed the earth which hid the tomb of these two martyrs from the view of the faithful; and during his pontificate, a priest,

<sup>1</sup> Avit. de Virgin. p. 1312.

<sup>2</sup> Bosius and Aringhi, Roma Subterranea. lib. iii. c. 30; lib. iv. c. 34, 37.

named Theodorus, built over it a church, as appears from an ancient epitaph published by Baronius. Anastasius relates that Pope Symmachus afterwards adorned it with plates and vessels of silver. Pope Clement VIII, in 1592, caused the sacred remains of SS. Protus and Hyacinthus to be removed from this church into the city, and to be deposited in the Church of St John Baptist, belonging to the Florentines; of which translation an account is given us by Sarazanius, an eye-witness, in his notes on the poems of Pope Damasus. A considerable part of their relics was given to the Benedictin abbey at Mulinheim, now called Saligunstat (*i.e.* seat of the blessed), in the diocese of Mentz, in 829, as Eginhard and others relate; part to the Church of St Vincent, at Metz, about the year 972, &c. See Perier, the Bollandist, t. ii. Sept. p. 758. Pope Damasus's poems, Carm. 27, p. 74. Tillemont, Persécut. de Valerien, art. 6.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 11 :*

ST PAPHNUTIUS, an Egyptian who, after spending several years in the desert under the great St Antony, was made Bishop of Upper Thebais; he was one of those who, under the tyrant Maximin Daia, lost the right eye and was afterwards sent to work in the mines : ST PATIENS, Archbishop of Lyons, whose sermons confuted the Photinian and Arian heresies : and ST PROTUS and ST HYACINTHUS, brothers, martyred in the third century.

## SEPTEMBER 12

### ST EANSWIDE, VIRGIN, ABBESS

(SEVENTH AGE)

[From her life in Capgrave; another MS. life by Ralph Buckland; Harpsfield, sæc. 7, c. 10; Alford's Annals, t. ii. p. 640; Lambert's Peramb. of Kent, fol. 160; Narrat. vet. de SS. Angl. quiesc. ap. Hickes, Thesaur. ling. Sept. Diss. Ep. p. 115, t. i.]

ST ETHELBERT, the first Christian king among the English, was succeeded in the kingdom of Kent by his son Eadbald who, though he was at first an impious and idolatrous prince, became afterwards a zealous Christian and a fervent penitent, as appears from his religious foundations and from the letters which were addressed to him by the popes. His daughter Eanswide added lustre to her birth by the eminent sanctity of her life. The great truths of our holy religion sunk so deep in her tender heart that, from her infancy, her whole delight was in prayer and the love of God. Hence she despised the world and all its foolish vanities and amusements. She rejected all proposals that tended to engage her in marriage, fearing the duties of that state, though good and just in themselves, would interrupt her darling exercises of devotion and heavenly contemplation. Having, by perseverance and importunity, obtained at length her father's consent, she founded a monastery of nuns upon the sea-coast, hard by Folkestone, in Kent. The sea having afterwards swallowed up part of this priory, the nunnery was removed to Folkestone, and the saint's relics were deposited in that church which had been built by her father, King Eadbald, in

honour of St Peter; but, after this translation of her relics, was often known by her name. St Eanswide was famous for many miracles; her chief festival in the English Calendar was kept on the 12th of September, probably the day of the translation of her relics, or of the dedication of some church in her honour.

Holy retirement, perfect purity of mind and body, and the uninterrupted exercises of heavenly contemplation and prayer, are then only great and excellent virtues when founded in sincere humility and improved by divine charity. By neglecting this, many may so quit the world and embrace a severe course of life as only to be martyrs of the devil, by seeking themselves even in the things they have renounced. The saints, who made this sacrifice to God, were always solicitous to render it complete, and they showed themselves more perfect as they saw more and more their own spiritual poverty, and continually aspired with the utmost ardour after greater perfection.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 12 :*

THE HOLY NAME OF MARY, a feast commemorating a great Christian victory over the Turks on this date, 1683 : ST ALBEUS, Bishop and chief patron of Munster : ST EANSWIDE, Abbess, daughter of St Ethelbert, the first Christian king of the English : ST GUY, in Latin GUIDO, called the poor man of Anderlecht ; he was " from his cradle serious, obedient, mild, patient, docile, and an enemy to sloth " : and BLESSED JUVENAL ANCINA, Bishop of Saluzzo, 1545-1602.

SEPTEMBER 13

## ST EULOGIUS, CONFESSOR, PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA

(A.D. 608)

[From Nicephorus's Chronicle ; the Paschal Chronicle ; Photius ; Bibl. Cod. 181, 208, 226, 230, &c.]

ST EULOGIUS was a Syrian by birth, and embraced young the monastic state in that country. Having, by an enlarged pursuit of learning, attained to a great variety of useful knowledge in the different branches of literature, he set himself to the study of divinity in the sacred sources of that science, which are the holy scriptures, and the tradition of the church explained in its councils, and the approved writings of its eminent pastors. From the time of his retreat he made this his chief study, to which he directed everything else; and as his industry was indefatigable, his parts quick, his apprehensions lively, and his judgment solid, his progress was such as to qualify him to be an illustrious champion for the truth, worthy to be ranked with St Gregory the Great, and St Eutychius, as one of the greatest lights of the church in the age wherein he lived. His character received still a brighter lustre from his sincere humility and spirit of holy compunction and prayer. In the great dangers and necessities of the church he was drawn out of his solitude and made priest of Antioch by the

patriarch St Anastasius, who was promoted to that dignity in 561 and, dying in 598, was succeeded by Anastasius the Younger. St Eulogius, whilst he lived at Antioch, entered into the strictest connexions with St Eutychius, patriarch of Constantinople, and joined his forces with that holy prelate against the enemies of the truth.

The Emperor Justinian, and his nephew and successor Justin the Younger, had been the plunderers of their empire and the grievous oppressors of their subjects; the former to support his extravagance and vanity, the latter to gratify his insatiable avarice and scandalous lusts. Justin II dying in 576, after a reign of ten years and ten months, Tiberius Constantine, a Thracian and a virtuous prince, was raised to the throne. He applied himself to heal the wounds caused during the former reigns, both in the church and state. His charities in all parts of the empire were boundless, and all his treasures were open to the poor. Amongst the evils with which the church was then afflicted, the disorders and confusion into which the tyranny of the Eutychians had thrown the church of Alexandria called aloud for a powerful remedy, and an able and zealous pastor endued with prudence and vigour to apply them. Upon the death of the patriarch John, St Eulogius was raised to that patriarchal dignity towards the close of the year 583, at the earnest desire of the emperor, who, having reigned only six years and ten months, died the same year, leaving his son-in-law, Mauritius, his successor in the imperial throne. Our saint was obliged to make a journey to Constantinople, about two years after his promotion, in order to concert measures concerning certain affairs of his church. He met at court St Gregory the Great, and contracted with him a holy friendship, so that from that time they seemed to be one heart and one soul. Among the letters of St Gregory, we have several extant which he wrote to our saint. St Eulogius composed many excellent works against the Acephali and other sects of Eutychians. St Gregory the Great, to whose censure the author submitted it, sent him his approbation with high commendations, saying, "I have not found anything but what is admirable in your writings," &c.<sup>1</sup> St Eulogius did not long survive St Gregory, for he died in the year 606 or, according to others, in 608.

We admire the great actions and the glorious triumphs of the saints; yet it is not so much in these that their sanctity consisted as in the constant, habitual heroic disposition of their souls. There is no one who does not sometimes do good actions, but he can never be called virtuous who does well only by humour, or by fits and starts, not by steady habits. It is an habitual poverty of spirit, humility, meekness, patience, purity, piety, and charity, which our divine Master recommends to us. If these pure heroic sentiments perfectly possess and fill our hearts, the whole tenour of our

<sup>1</sup> St Greg. lib. viii. Ep. 42.

conduct, whether in private or in public life, will be an uniform train of virtuous actions, which will derive their perfection from the degree of fervour and purity from which they spring, and which, according to the essential property of virtue, is always improving and always improvable.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 13 :*

ST AMATUS, called in French AMÉ, who, born of a wealthy family, learned the spirit of Jesus Christ from the example of his pious parents : another ST AMATUS or AMÉ, Abbot in Lorraine : ST EULOGIUS, a Syrian Bishop, Patriarch of Alexandria, 608 : and ST MAURILIUS, Bishop, who, leaving a large estate and a tender mother at Milan, went to St Martin of Tours, by whom he was directed to Christian perfection.

## SEPTEMBER 14

### THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

(A.D. 629)

THE miraculous appearance of the cross to Constantine,<sup>1</sup> and the discovery of that sacred wood by St Helen,<sup>2</sup> gave the first occasion to this festival, which was celebrated under the title of the Exaltation of the Cross, on the

<sup>1</sup> How weak soever the church appeared in its infancy, the whole power of the Roman empire, exerted against it with the utmost fury, was not able to stop its progress, much less to extinguish it. The little flock of Christ grew by its own losses, and gathered strength from the most violent persecutions ; the very emperors who had so long waged war against the cross confessed themselves vanquished, laid down their arms, and became its votaries and protectors. This wonderful change was not the work of men, but of God ; nor was it effected without miracles, though it was itself most miraculous. Christ, who conquered the world, not by the sword but by the ignominy of his cross, was pleased to make Constantine triumph by that sacred sign, that he might know the hand by which he was raised. This emperor marched from the border of the Rhine through Gaul and part of Italy by Verona to Rome, against the tyrant Maxentius, who had declared war against him, and was at Rome with an army much superior to his. Constantine, though he was not yet a Christian, earnestly invoked the one true God, both on his march and the day before he gave battle, and Christ was pleased by a double vision to show him from what power he received the empire of the world. Constantine, just after he had put up an earnest prayer to the true God, was travelling with part of his army at midday, says the martyr Artemius ; about noon, says Socrates ; most accurately, Eusebius, a little after midday, the sun beginning to decline, when he and all those that were with him beheld with astonishment in the sky, above the sun, a bright cross of light, as has been related in the Notes on the Life of St Helen (t. ii. p. 250), and that of St Cyril of Jerusalem (t. i. p. 360). The night following, Christ appeared to Constantine in his sleep, with the same sign, and commanded him to have a representation of it to be made, and to make use of it for his standard in battle. The emperor rose very early the next morning, imparted this second vision to his friends, and gave orders for the famous imperial standard to be made in that form. It was known by the name of Labarum, the etymology of which word is very uncertain. It was a pole plated with gold, upon which was laid horizontally a cross bar, so as to form the figure of a cross. The top of the perpendicular shaft was adorned with a crown with gold, and ornamented with sparkling precious stones. In the middle of this crown was a monogram representing the name of Christ by the two initial Greek letters, X *Chi*, equivalent to our CH, and P *Rho*, equivalent to our R. This last-mentioned letter was formed in the *Chi*, and rose a little above it. A purple veil of a square figure hung from the cross bar, spangled with bright jewels, which dazzled the eyes of the beholders. Above the veil were afterwards set the images of the emperor and his children.

The emperor chose fifty men of the stoutest and most religious among his guards to carry this banner by turns ; it was always borne before the emperor in battles. Constantine caused banners of the same fashion, but less, to be made for every legion, and had the monogram of the name of Christ framed, in the form of a cross, on his helmet, and in the shields of his soldiers. Julian the Apostate changed on his medals this sacred monogram into the old letters, S.P.Q.R., But Jovian and the succeeding emperors restored it.

Lactantius, who was preceptor to Crispus Cæsar, Constantine's son, ascribes Constantine's victor over Maxentius to the miraculous vision which he had in his sleep before the battle. Philostorgius, an Arian contemporary historian, in certain fragments of his history preserved by Photius, describing Constantine's vision of the cross in the air, says the heavenly sign extended very wide in the East with a wonderful light, and with the following inscription, " By this conquer." In several ancient medals it is expressed in Latin : *In hoc victor eris*.

<sup>2</sup> See May 3.

14th of September, both by the Greeks and Latins as early as in the fifth and sixth ages,<sup>1</sup> at Jerusalem from the year 335. The recovery of this precious instrument and memorial of our redemption out of the hands of the infidels, in the reign of Heraclius, in the seventh century, was afterwards gratefully commemorated on the same day; and the feast of the Invention or Discovery of the Cross has been removed, in the Latin Church, to the 3rd of May ever since the eighth century. The history of the recovery of this sacred relic from the Persians is gathered from the continuation of the Paschal Chronicle, Theophanes, Cedrenus, and other historians.

Chosroes II, the most barbarous and perfidious king of Persia, availing himself of the weakness of the reign of the cruel and covetous usurper Phocas, broke peace with the empire upon the specious pretence of revenging the murder of the Emperor Mauritius and his family, whom Phocas had most inhumanly massacred. The Persians, meeting with no opposition, plundered Mesopotamia and part of Syria. Heraclius, prefect of Africa, being pressed by the chief statesmen and senators to assume the purple and rid the empire of a usurper, went with his forces by sea to Constantinople, after a successful battle made Phocas prisoner, and put him and his children to death in the year 611, the tyrant having reigned eight years and four months. The new emperor, by suppliant entreaties, begged a peace of Chosroes, with the proffer of an annual tribute; but the haughty barbarian dismissed his ambassadors, without an audience, and in the first year of the reign of Heraclius the Persians took Edessa and Apamea and advanced as far as Antioch: in the second they took Cæsarea in Cappadocia; in the fourth Damascus, and in the fifth (which was the year 614), in the month of June, they possessed themselves of Jerusalem, filling that city with outrages which cannot be mentioned without horror. Many thousands of clerks, monks, nuns, and virgins were cruelly massacred, ninety thousand Christians were sold for slaves to the Jews, and afterwards many of them were tortured and slain. The churches, even that of the holy sepulchre, were burnt, and all the rich movables were carried away, among which were an infinite number of consecrated vessels, many precious relics, and that part of the wood of the true cross which had been left there by St Helen. The patrician Nicetas found means, by the help of one of the friends of Sarbazara, the Persian general, to save two holy relics, namely, the sponge with which the soldiers gave our Saviour vinegar to drink, and the lance which pierced his side; both which he sent to Constantinople. The sacred sponge was exposed to the view of the people in the great church on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, on the 14th of September, the same year. The sacred lance was brought thither on the Saturday, the 26th of October; it was publicly venerated in the great church on the following

<sup>1</sup> See the Bollandists on May 3. Thomassin, *Tr. des Fêtes*, p. 479; Baillet, *Hist. de cette Fête*; Jos. Assemani, *Comm. in Calend. Univ. t. v. p. 236*, ad 14 Sept. See also on the 3rd of May.

Tuesday and Wednesday by the men, and on Thursday and Friday by the women. The next year the Persians took Alexandria and plundered all Egypt, and in the year following they conquered Carthage. These losses and calamities forced Heraclius again suppliantly to beg peace of the victorious tyrant, who laughed at his request and blasphemously declared, "That he would never let those men rest so long as they should adore one who had been crucified by other men, and should refuse to worship the sun." Heraclius, depending wholly upon the Saviour of the world, whose glory he was to assert, in the extreme poverty of the state, borrowed the gold and silver which was found in the churches and coined it into money to raise an army for the protection of his subjects.

The emperor resolved at length to carry the war into Persia itself, to oblige the infidels to return home for the defence of their own country. That he might not leave any enemies behind him, he concluded a peace with the khan of the Turci Avari, who had attacked him on the side of Thrace, and in the year 622, the twelfth of his reign, began his march towards Persia immediately after Easter. When he put himself at the head of his army, holding in his hand a picture of Jesus Christ, he protested to his soldiers that he would never abandon them till death, and set before them how the enemies of God had overrun their country, rendered the cities desolate, laid the countries waste before them, burnt the sanctuaries, profaned the holy altars with blood, and defiled the sanctity of the most holy places by their brutal lusts and debaucheries. With this army he defeated the Persians the same year in Armenia, and in the ensuing summer took the city Gazac, in Persia, and burnt in it the fine temple, and the palace of Chosroes, in which was a rich statue of that prince sitting under a dome, which represented the heavens with the sun, moon, and stars, and round about it angels holding sceptres in their hands, with machines to make a noise like thunder. Leading his army back to take winter quarters in Albania, he there, out of compassion, released fifty thousand Persian captives he had brought with him and supplied them with necessaries; which act of humanity made them all to pray with tears for his success, and that he might deliver Persia from a tyrant who, by his cruelty and exactions, was the destroyer of mankind.

On the 12th of December, in 627, Heraclius gave the Persians an entire overthrow, almost without any loss on his side, near the ruins of the ancient city of Ninive, under the command of Rezastes, who was himself found among the slain, with his shield and armour of massy gold; and with him fell most of the field-officers and the greatest part of the Persian army. The proud Chosroes was driven from town to town, yet continued obstinately deaf to all proposals of peace. The disdain with which Chosroes rejected all means of peace, even though Heraclius was master of the greatest part of Persia, extremely exasperated his subjects;

and his general Sarbazara, who was near Chalcedon, upon information that his master had condemned him to die, openly revolted from him to the Romans. Chosroes locked himself up with his wives and children in the strong city of Seleucia, on the Tigris, and being there seized with a dysentery, declared Mardesanes, or Medarses, his son by Sirem, the most beloved of his concubines, his successor, and ordered preparations to be made for his coronation. His eldest son, Siroes, provoked at this injustice, appealed to the nobles, took up arms, released the Roman prisoners whom he sent back to Heraclius, seized on his father, bound him in chains, and threw him into a strong dungeon which Chosroes had lately fortified to keep his treasures in. Exasperated more and more at his father's arrogance, even though the tyrant saw himself in his power, Siroes set no bounds to his rage, allowed him only a small quantity of bread and water for his subsistence, and bade him eat the gold which he had amassed by the oppression of so many innocent people. He sent his satrapes and his enemies to insult him, and caused Mardesanes, whom he would have crowned, and all the rest of his children, to be murdered before his eyes. In this manner was the old king treated for five days together, during which time he was frequently shot at and wounded with arrows, but not mortally, that his death might be the more lingering. He expired on the fifth day of these wounds. Siroes then concluded a firm peace with Heraclius, released all the Roman prisoners, and among the rest Zachary, patriarch of Jerusalem; restored the provinces which the Christians had lost, and, among other spoils, the true cross, which had been carried into Persia fourteen years before by Sarbazara when he took Jerusalem.

The emperor brought this precious relic with him to Constantinople, where he made his entry with a most splendid triumph. In the beginning of the spring of the following year, 629, he embarked to carry the cross again to Jerusalem, and to return thanks to God in that holy place for his victories. He would carry it upon his own shoulders into the city with the utmost pomp, but stopped suddenly at the entrance of the city and found he was not able to go forward. The patriarch, Zachary, who walked by his side, suggested to him that his pomp seemed not agreeable to the humble appearance which Christ made when he bore his cross through the streets of that city. "You," said he, "walk in your gaudy imperial robes, he was meanly clad; you have on your head a rich diadem, he was crowned with a wreath of thorns; you go with your shoes on, he walked barefoot." Hereupon the emperor laid aside his purple and his crown, put on mean clothes, went along barefoot with the procession, and devoutly replaced the cross where it stood before. It still continued in the silver case in which it had been carried away, and the patriarch and clergy, finding the seals whole, opened the case with the key, venerated it, and showed it to the people.



“About seven days before the 1st of August, the holy cross (*i.e.* that large portion which Constantine the Great deposited in the imperial palace at Constantinople) was taken out of the holy treasury in which it was kept with other precious relics and rich holy vessels, betwixt the third and sixth ode of matins then singing. It was laid on the ground, that the protopapa or chief priest of the palace might anoint it all over with balsam and precious perfumes. Then it was set up in the church of the palace of our Lady of the Pharos, exposed to the veneration of the people. After matins, the clergy of the palace assembled before it, singing hymns in praise of the cross, called Staurosima, or of the cross. Then the princes and lords came to venerate it before they assisted at the Sunday's procession, in which they attended the emperor every Sunday and holiday to the divine service in the church of the palace, or on certain great festivals to some other principal church in the city. The chief priest then took up the cross on his head, having on a purple cassock, and over it a rich scaramangium (or great cope which covers the whole body), and, attended by the clergy and others in procession, carried it through the golden hall, before the oratory of St Basil, placed it to be venerated by all the senate; then proceeded to the palace of Daphne, and exposed it in the Church of St Stephen. On the 28th of July the priests began to carry the cross through all the streets and to all the houses, and afterwards round the walls of the city, that by the devotion of the people and their united prayers, God would, through the cross and merits of his Son, bless and protect the city and all its inhabitants. On the 13th of September it was brought back to the palace and placed on a rich throne in the Chrysotriclinium, or golden hall, where the clergy sung the hymns in praise of the cross during its exaltation there. It was afterwards carried through all the apartments of the palace, then deposited in the chapel of St Theodorus. In the evening it was delivered back to the keeper of the sacred treasure. Next morning it was carefully cleansed by the protopapa and the keeper, and again deposited in the rich case in the treasury.” See the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogeneta, lib. ii. c. 8. In the eleventh chapter he writes with what devotion and pomp the three great crosses kept in the great palace were taken out in the third or middle week of Lent and exposed to veneration; one in the new church of this great palace, another in the Church of St Stephen, in the palace of Daphne, the third in the patriarchal Church of St Sophia. All were brought back on Friday in the same week with a procession, torches, adoration of the princes, senate; hymns, &c., as above.

Our divine Redeemer is the spiritual king of our souls, and it is by the love and spirit of his cross that he must reign in them. By this happy instrument he has rescued us from the power of sin and conquered death and hell. But do not our sloth and malice still hold out against him?

Have the boundless excess of his love, and the omnipotent power of his grace, yet triumphed over our hearts? Is his holy cross planted there? Does it daily grow and spread itself in our affections? The spirit of the cross, or of Christ crucified, is the spirit of that perfect humility, meekness, charity, patience, and all other virtues which he preaches to us by his cross. Can we look on a crucifix, or form the cross on our foreheads, without being pierced with grief, and covered with shame and confusion, to see ourselves so little acquainted with it, and its happy fruits, so filled with the contrary spirit of the world? Let us most earnestly and assiduously conjure our loving Saviour, by his holy cross, and by his infinite love and mercy, to subdue our obstinacy, to extinguish in us whatever opposes his sweet reign, perfectly to form his spirit in our hearts, and entirely to subject all our powers and affections to himself. Then we shall begin to taste the most sweet hidden manna that is found in the cross, that is, in the devout remembrance and contemplation of that mystery, and in the participation or imitation of it by patient suffering. Then shall we understand the glory, the happiness, and unspeakable advantages and treasures that are its portion.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 14 :*

THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS: ST CATHERINE OF GENOA, widow, born 1447, her father being viceroy of Naples, was married to a gay young nobleman who dissipated his own and the fortune she brought him; he died a true penitent, and she devoted the rest of her life to the service of the sick and of lepers: and ST CORMAC, King of Munster, Bishop of Cashel, "a saint, a poet and a king."

#### SEPTEMBER 15

#### ST JOHN THE DWARF, ANCHORET OF SCETÉ

ST JOHN, surnamed from his low stature Colobus, that is, the Little, or the Dwarf, was famous among the eminent ancient saints that inhabited the deserts of Egypt. He retired, together with an elder brother, into the vast wilderness of Sceté, and, putting himself under the direction of a holy old hermit, he set himself, with his whole heart and with all his strength, to labour in subduing himself, and in putting on the divine spirit of Christ. The first condition which Christ requires, the preliminary article which he lays down for his service, is a practice of perfect self-denial, by which we learn to die to ourselves and all our vicious inclinations. So long as inordinate self-love and passions reign in the heart, they cannot fail to produce their fruits; we are imperceptibly governed by them in the circle of our ordinary actions, and remain habitually enslaved to pride, anger, impatience, envy, sensuality, and other vices, which often break forth into open transgressions of the divine law; and a lurking, inordinate self-love, whilst it holds the empire in the affections, insinuates itself, under subtle disguises, into all our actions, becomes the main-spring of all the motions of our heart, and debases our virtues themselves with a mixture of vice and imperfection. Virtue is generally defective, even in many who desire to

serve God, because very few have the courage perfectly to vanquish themselves. It is strange that men should be so blind, or so cowardly, in a point of such infinite importance, since Christ has laid down the precept of perfect abnegation and humility as the foundation of the empire of his divine grace and love in a soul: upon this all the saints raise the edifice of their virtue. He who builds not upon it, builds upon sand. He who, without this precaution, multiplies his alms, his fasts, and his devotions, takes a great deal of pains to lose, in a great measure, the fruit of his labours.

Our holy anchoret, lest he should be in danger of missing his aim, resolved to neglect no means by which he might obtain the victory over himself. The old hermit, who was his director for this first lesson, bade him plant in the ground a dry walking-stick which he held in his hand, and water it every day till it should bring forth fruit. John did so with great simplicity, though the river was at a considerable distance. It is related that when he had continued his task without speaking one word, in the third year the stick, which had taken root, pushed forth leaves and buds and produced fruit: the old hermit, gathering the fruit, carried it to the church, and giving it to some of the brethren, said, "Take and eat the fruit of obedience."<sup>1</sup> Posthumian, who was in Egypt in 420, assured St Sulpicius Severus that he was shown this tree, which grew in the yard of the monastery, and which he saw covered with boughs and green leaves.<sup>2</sup> St John used to say, that as a man who sees a wild beast or a serpent coming towards him climbs up a tree to be out of their reach; so a person who perceives any evil thoughts coming upon him, in order to secure himself against the danger, must ascend up to God by earnest prayer. Being yet a novice in the monastic state, and much taken with the charms of heavenly contemplation, he said one day to his elder brother, "I could wish to live without distraction, or earthly concerns, like the angels, that I might be able to serve and praise God without interruption." Saying this, and leaving his cloak behind him, he went into a more secret part of the wilderness. After being absent a week, he returned and knocked at the door of his brother's cell. Being asked his name, he said, "I am your brother John." "How can that be?" replied the other; "for my brother John is become an angel, and lives no more among men." St John begged pardon for his rashness, and acknowledged that this mortal state does not admit such a perfection, but requires that contemplation and manual labour mutually succeed and assist each other, and confessed that man's life on earth is labour and penance, not fruition. It was one of this saint's maxims: "If a general would take a city, he begins the siege by debarring it from supplies of water and provisions; so, by sobriety, fasting, and maceration of the flesh, are our affections and passions to be reduced, and our domestic enemy weakened."

<sup>1</sup> Cotelier, *Apoth. Patr. litt. i. n. 1*, p. 468; Rosweid. *Vitæ Patr. a Pelagio Latinè versæ lib. v. &c.*

<sup>2</sup> St Sulpicius Severus, *Dial. i. c. 19*, p. 422.

How careful he was to watch against all occasions of danger appears from the following instances. As he was praying, and plying his work in platting mats, on the road to Sceté, he was one day met by a carrier driving camels, who reviled him in the most injurious terms. The saint, for fear the tranquillity of his soul should be any way impaired, threw down the work he had in his hands and ran away. Another time, when he was reaping corn in the harvest, he ran away, because he heard one of the reapers angry with another. Happening one day, as he was going to the church of Sceté, to hear two persons wrangling together, he made haste back to his cell, but walked several times round it in profound recollection before he went in, that he might purify his ears from the injurious words he had heard, and bring his mind perfectly calm to converse with God. By this continual watchfulness over himself he acquired so perfect a habit of meekness, humility, and patience that nothing was able to cloud or disturb his mind. When one said to him, "Thou hast a heart full of venom," he sweetly answered, "That is true, and much more so than you think."

It was a usual saying of this saint, "The safety of a monk consists in his keeping always his cell, watching constantly over himself, and having God continually present in his mind." As for his own part, he never discoursed on worldly affairs, and never spoke of news, the ordinary amusement of the slothful. Some persons one day, to try him, began a conversation with him, saying, "We ought to thank God for the plentiful rains that are fallen this year. The palm-trees sprout well, and our brethren will easily find leaves and twigs for their work in making mats and baskets." St John contented himself with answering, "In like manner when the spirit of God comes down upon the hearts of his servants, they grow green again, as I may say, and are renewed, shooting, as it were, fresh leaves in the fear of God." This reply made them no more attempt any such conversation with him. The saint's mind was so intent on God in holy contemplation that at his work he sometimes platted in one basket the twigs which should have made two, and often went wrong in his work, forgetting what he was doing. One day, when a driver of camels, or a carrier, knocked at his door, to carry away his materials and instruments for his work, St John thrice forgot what he went to fetch in returning from his door, till he continued to repeat to himself, "the camel, my platting instrument." The same happened to him when one came to fetch the baskets he had made, and as often as he came back from his door he sat down again to his work, till at last he desired the brother to come in and take them himself.

St John called humility and compunction the first and most necessary of all virtues. By the fervour and assiduity of his prayer and heavenly contemplation, all his discourse on God was inflamed. A certain brother coming one day to see him, designing to speak to him only for two or three minutes, being in haste to go back to his cell, so ardent and sweet

was their conversation on spiritual things that they continued it the whole night till morning. Perceiving it day, they went out of the saint's cell, the one to return home, the other to conduct him some steps, and falling into discourse on heaven, their entertainment lasted till midday. Then St John took him again into his cell to eat a morsel for his refection, after which they parted. St John, seeing a monk laugh in a conference, sat down and, bursting into tears, said, "What reason can this brother have to laugh, whilst we have so many to weep?" A certain charitable devout young woman, named Paësia, fell into poverty, and gradually into a disorderly life. The monks of Sceté entreated St John to endeavour to reclaim her from her evil courses. The saint repaired to her house, but was refused entrance, till persisting a long time, and repeating that she would have no reason to repent that she had spoke to him, he got admittance. Then sitting down by her, he said with his accustomed sweetness, "What reason can you have to complain of Jesus that you should thus abandon him to plunge yourself in so deplorable an abyss!" At these words she was struck to the quick: and seeing the saint melt into tears, she said to him, "Why do you weep so bitterly?" St John replied, "How can I refrain from weeping whilst I see Satan in possession of your heart." She said, "Is the gate of penitence yet open to me?" The saint having answered that the treasures of the divine mercy are inexhaustible, she replied, "Conduct me whither you please." Hereupon he, rising up, said, "Let us go." The penitent followed him without saying another word, and without giving any orders about her household or servants; a circumstance which he took notice of with joy, as it showed how entirely she was taken up with the thoughts only of saving her soul. She spent the remainder of her life in austere penance, and died happily soon after in the wilderness, having no other pillow than a hillock to lay her head on. John learnt, by a revelation, that her short but fervent penitence had been perfect before God. When our saint drew near his end, his disciples entreated him to leave them, by way of legacy, some wholesome lesson of Christian perfection. He sighed, and that he might, out of humility, shun the air of a teacher, alleging his own maxim and practice, he said, "I never followed my own will; nor did I ever teach any other what I had not first practised myself." St John died about the beginning of the fifth century. See Cotelier, *Apoth. Patrum*, litt. i. p. 468 to 484; Rosweide, lib. v. *Vitæ Patrum*, translated into Latin by Pelagius, deacon of Rome, who was chosen pope in 558, Tillemont, t. x. p. 427.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 15 :*

THE SEVEN SORROWS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, a feast resembling that of the Friday in Passion week : ST AICARD or ACHARD, seventh Bishop of Troyes, about 486 : ST APER or EVRE : ST JOHN THE DWARF (from his low stature), anchoret of Sceté : ST NICETAS, martyr, in the fourth age : and ST NICOMEDES, a priest of Rome, beaten to death with clubs for assisting the martyrs and for burying their bodies.

SEPTEMBER 16

## ST CORNELIUS, POPE, MARTYR

(A.D. 252)

[From Eus. lib. vi. c. 43; St Pacianus, Ep. 23; St Cypr. Ep. 52, ed. Pam. 55, ed. Oxon. ad Antonianum, item Ep. 44, &c., ed. Oxon. See Berti, Diss. Hist. t. ii. p. 167; Orsi and Tillemont; Suysken, t. iii. Sept. p. 18.]

THE holy Pope Fabian having been crowned with martyrdom on the 20th of January, in the year 250, the see of Rome remained vacant above sixteen months, the clergy and people not being able all that while, through the violence of the persecution, to assemble for the election of a bishop. St Cyprian says that such was the rage of the persecutor Decius that he would more easily have suffered a competitor in his empire than a bishop in Rome. At length, however, when that emperor was taken up in opposing the revolt of Julius Valens, or in his wars against the Goths, at a distance from Rome, Cornelius was chosen to fill the apostolic chair in 251. St Cyprian testifies that he was a person of an unblemished character and virginal purity, remarkable for his humility; meek, modest, peaceable, and adorned with all other virtues; that he was not advanced to the episcopal dignity on a sudden, but had gone through all the orders of the clergy, as the previous steps, and served the Lord in the functions of each distinct order, as the canons require. At the time of St Fabian's death he was a priest in the Roman church, and had the chief share in the direction of affairs during the vacancy of the holy see. Far from aiming at, or desiring the supreme dignity in the church to which he was raised, he suffered violence, says the same St Cyprian, and was promoted to it by force and compulsion. The election of Cornelius was made by a due assembly of almost all the clergy of Rome; a great number also of the laity, who were present, consented to and demanded his ordination. The concurring suffrages of sixteen ancient and worthy bishops (two of whom were Africans), who happened then to be in Rome, confirmed the same, and the elect was compelled to receive the episcopal consecration. St Cyprian, and other bishops, according to custom, despatched to him letters of communion and congratulation. Matters were thus settled when the devil found in Novatian an instrument to disturb the peace of the church.

This man had been a Stoic philosopher, and had gained a considerable reputation by his eloquence. He at length embraced the faith, but continued a catechumen till, falling dangerously ill and his life being despaired of, he was baptized in bed, not by immersion, which was then the most usual method, but by infusion, or the pouring on of water. Recovering, he received not the seal of the Lord by the hand of the bishop, says St Pacian, that is to say, the sacrament of confirmation. Both these defects were, by the ancient discipline of the church, bars to holy orders. Novatian,

notwithstanding this double irregularity, was afterwards ordained priest. The persecution coming on, he kept himself shut up in his house, and when the deacons solicited him to go and assist his brethren, he went away in a rage, saying he would no longer serve the church, being fond of another kind of philosophy. Afterwards, with a view to make himself conspicuous by opposing the pastors, he became very rigid, and complained that some that had fallen in the persecution were too easily admitted again. By this pharisaical zeal he made a small party, and counted some among the confessors, who were in prison at Rome, in his interest. He was much emboldened in his cabals by Novatus, a wicked priest of Carthage.

To frame a clear conception of this controversy, it is necessary to observe that those Christians who in the persecution had offered 'incense to idols were called *Sacrificati* and *Thurificati*; others who purchased with money of the imperial officers libels or certificates of safety, as if they had offered sacrifice (by which they were guilty of the same scandal), were called *Libellatici*, or certificate-men. All the lapsed, upon giving marks of sincere repentance, were admitted by the church to a course of severe canonical penance, which was shorter and milder with regard to the certificate-men than to apostates; which term being completed (or abridged by an indulgence given by the bishop), they were received to communion. If any penitent, during the course of his penance, happened to be in danger of death, the benefit of absolution and communion was granted him. This discipline was confirmed by several councils at Rome, in Africa, and other places, and at this Novatian took offence, pretending that the lapsed ought never to be again admitted to penance, or to receive absolution, not even after having performed any course of penance, or in the article of their death. Yet he did not bid them despair, but left them to the divine mercy, exhorting them privately (though excluded from the communion of the rest of the faithful) to make application to God for mercy, hoping that he would be moved to show them compassion at the last day. Novatian soon added heresy to his schism, maintaining that the church had not received from Christ power to absolve sinners from the crime of apostasy, how penitent soever they might be. His followers afterwards taught the same of murder and fornication, and condemned second marriages. His disciples were called *Novatians* and *Cathari*, that is, pure. Having separated many persons from the communion of Cornelius, he decoyed three bishops from a corner of Italy to come to Rome and ordain him bishop of that city. Thus Novatian was the first antipope, though he was author not only of a schism, but also of a heresy, and was acknowledged bishop only by heretics.

St Cornelius assembled at Rome a synod of sixty bishops, in which he confirmed the canons by which it was ordained to admit the lapsed that were penitent to public penance; and bishops and priests, who had fallen, only to the rank of laymen, without power of exercising any sacerdotal

function. Novatian, who was there present, and obstinately refused to communicate with such penitents, was excommunicated. The confessors, Maximus a priest, Urbanus, Sidonius, Celerinus, and Moses, who had been seduced by Novatian to favour his schism, were disabused by the letters of St Cyprian and the evidence of truth and justice, and were all received to communion by St Cornelius, to the great joy of the people, as appears from a letter of this pope to St Cyprian,<sup>1</sup> and from a fragment of the last of his four letters to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, preserved by Eusebius. This historian informs us that there were in the church of Rome, in the time of Pope Cornelius, forty-six priests, seven deacons, seven subdeacons, forty-two acolytes, fifty-two exorcists, lectors, and janitors, or door-keepers, and one thousand five hundred widows and other poor persons whom the church maintained.

St Cyprian exceedingly extols the zeal and piety with which St Cornelius behaved in his pastoral charge, and the courage and steadfastness with which he adhered to his duty in the most perilous times. "Should not he be ranked among the most illustrious martyrs and confessors," says he, "who continued so long under the expectation of tormentors and savage executioners from the enraged tyrant, to mangle his body? to behead, or to burn, or to crucify? or, with some new and unexampled invention of malice and cruelty, to tear and torture the bowels of this intrepid champion, opposing the dreadful edicts, and, through the mighty power of his faith, despising the torments wherewith he was threatened? Our saint, who deserved by his constancy to be ranked among the martyrs in the persecution of Decius, attained to his crown a short time after. Decius being defeated by the Goths in Thrace, perished in a bog, towards the end of the year 251, and was succeeded by Gallus, the general of his army, who had betrayed him. The respite which this revolution seemed to give the church was of a short continuance. A pestilence, which ravaged the empire, alarmed the superstition of the new emperor, who thought he should appease the anger of his false gods by taking vengeance on the Christians. Pope Cornelius was the first person that was apprehended at Rome. Having made a glorious confession of his faith, he was sent into banishment to Centumcellæ, now called Civita Vecchia. St Cyprian wrote him a congratulatory letter upon the news of his happiness in suffering for Christ.<sup>2</sup> In this epistle he clearly foretells the approaching conflicts of them both, and says God had, by a special revelation, advertised him of his own, and that he therefore earnestly exhorted his people to prepare for it in continual watchfulness, fasting, and prayer.

St Cornelius was called to eternal bliss in 252, on the 14th of September, on the same day on which St Cyprian was martyred six years after, though

<sup>1</sup> Inter Cyprian. Ep. 46, ed. Pam. 49, ed. Oxon.  
<sup>2</sup> St Cypr. Ep. 57, Pam. 60, Fello.



they are commemorated together in the present Roman Martyrology on the 16th. The Liberian Calendar mentions that St Cornelius, having been banished to Centumcellæ, slept in the Lord on the 14th of this month. His relics were first interred in the cemetery of Calixtus, where St Leo I built a chapel in honour of them; Adrian I placed them in a stately church which he built in the city to bear his name, as Anastasius relates. In the reign of Charles, the son of Lewis Debonnaire, the sacred remains of St Cornelius were translated to Compiègne, in France, where the emperor built a church and monastery of canons to receive them, which, in 1150, was put in the hands of Benedictine monks; of which famous abbey of St Cornelius a considerable portion of these relics is to this day esteemed the richest treasure. The head and one arm were removed to the abbey of Inda, on the river of that name, near Aix-la-Chapelle, and there honoured with pilgrimages to this day, and miracles. Part of this arm and other bones were translated from Inda to Rotnay, or Rosnay, formerly a monastery founded by St Amand, in the diocese of Cambrai, now in that of Mechline, between Courtray and Tournay, and converted long since into a collegiate church of canons.<sup>1</sup>

St Irenæus, Origen, and other fathers observe that most of the heretics were spared in the persecutions, which fell either solely, or at least most heavily, upon the Catholics. This was sometimes owing to the subterfuges of the heretics, often to the persecutors. St Cyprian, in his last letter to Pope Cornelius,<sup>2</sup> makes the same remark concerning the Novatians, but attributes it to the devil. "Who," says he, "are the servants of God whom the devil so molests? Who are truly Christians, whom Antichrist with all his might opposes? For the devil troubles not himself with those whom he hath already made sure of, nor does he labour to conquer those that are now in his power. The great enemy of the church overlooks them as his captives, and passes them by without thinking them worth his notice whom he hath already seduced and alienated from the church, and employs his pains and stratagems upon those in whom he observes Christ to dwell."

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 16 :*

ST CORNELIUS, Pope and martyr : ST CYPRIAN, Archbishop of Carthage, who has left writings that are among the most precious historical documents of the African Church : ST EDITHA or EADGITH (961), the natural daughter of King Edgar. "She may be said rather to have not known the world than to have left it" : another ST EDITHA, daughter of King Frewald, died a nun at Ailesbury : ST EUPHEMIA, virgin, martyr, suffered a glorious death in the city of Chalcedon about 307 : ST LUCIA, a noble widow, and ST GERMANUS, martyrs under Diocletian in Rome : and ST NINIAN or NYNIAS, Bishop, the apostle of the Southern Picts.

<sup>1</sup> See Pamelius in St Cypr. Miræus in Fastis, the Bollandist, p. 188, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 57, alias 60, ad Coru.

SEPTEMBER 17

ST LAMBERT, MARTYR, BISHOP OF MAESTRICHT, AND  
PATRON OF LIÈGE

(A.D. 709)

[From his life written by Godescalc, deacon of Liège, in Mabillon, sæc. 3; Ben. and in Canisius Lect. Antiq. t. ii. part 1, lib. cxlii., with the animadversions of Basnage. This work was compiled, with candour and sincerity (not in 773, as Le Cointe and some others mistook, but about 729), from the relation of those who attended the saint, as Dom. Rivet demonstrates, Hist. Littér. de la France, t. iv. p. 58. Stephen, Bishop of Liège, Anselm, and Nicholas, canons of the same church, Rainer, monk of St Laurence's, near that town, Giles of Orval, and Sigebert have also written lives of St Lambert: that published by Godescalc is the foundation of all the rest; but that compiled by Stephen is the most elegant and methodical. See also Miræus, Annal. Belgic. ad annos 656, 676, 692, 696; Suyken the Bollandist, t. v. p. 518; Gall. Chr. Nov. t. iii. p. 827; Martenne, &c.]

ST LANDEBERT, called in latter ages Lambert, was a native of Maestricht, and born of a noble and wealthy family, who had been Christians for many descents. His father caused him to be instructed from his infancy in sacred learning, and afterwards recommended him to St Theodard to perfect his education. This holy bishop had succeeded St Remaculus, first, in the government of his two great abbeys of Malmedi and Stavelo, and, ten years after, when the former retired to Stavelo, in the episcopal see of Maestricht. He had such an esteem for this illustrious and holy pupil that he spared no attention in instructing and training him up to the most perfect practice of Christian virtue. St Theodard is honoured as a martyr on the 10th of September. St Lambert was chosen to succeed him, with the consent of King Childeric, and the applause of his whole court, where the saint was in great repute. Lambert regarded the episcopal charge as a burden too heavy for his shoulders, as saints have always done, and, trembling under its grievous obligations, set himself earnestly to discharge them without human respect or fear, imploring light and strength from above by assiduous humble prayer. Childeric II reigned first in Austrasia, Vulfoade being at that time mayor of his palace, whilst Theodoric III succeeded his brother Clotaire III in Neustria and Burgundy, under whom Ebroin tyrannically usurped the dignity of mayor of the palace. So detestable did the cruelty of this minister render the reign of the prince that his subjects deposed him, so that Childeric became king of all France, Theodoric and Ebroin being shorn monks, the former at St Denis, the latter at Luxeu; to which condition they both consented, that their lives might be spared. King Childeric II, a debauched and cruel prince, was slain by a conspiracy of noblemen in the year 673, the eleventh of his reign; and Theodoric, his brother, leaving the monastery of St Denis, was again acknowledged king of Neustria, and Dagobert II, the son of King Sigebert, in Austrasia.

This revolution affected St Lambert, merely because he had been heretofore greatly favoured by Childeric. He was expelled from his see,

in which was placed one Faramond. Our saint retired to the monastery of Stavelo with only two of his domestics; and, during the seven years that he continued there, he obeyed the rule as strictly as the youngest novice could have done. One instance will suffice to show with how perfect a sacrifice of himself he devoted his heart to serve God according to the perfection of his state. As he was rising one night in winter to his private devotions, he happened to let fall his wooden sandal or slipper, so that it made a noise. This the abbot heard, and looking upon it as a breach of the silence then to be observed in the community, he ordered him that had given occasion to that noise to go and pray before the cross. This was a great cross which stood in the open air before the church door. Lambert, without making any answer, or discovering who he was, laid down the upper garment he was going to put on and went out as he was, barefoot, and covered only with his hair shirt; and in this condition he prayed, kneeling before the cross, three or four hours. Whilst the monks were warming themselves after matins, the abbot inquired if all were there. Answer was made that he had sent one to the cross, who was not yet come in. The abbot ordered that he should be called; and was strangely surprised to find that the person was the holy bishop, who made his appearance quite covered with snow, and almost frozen with cold. At the sight of him the abbot and the monks fell on the ground and asked his pardon. "God forgive you," said he, "for thinking you stand in need of pardon for this action. As for myself, is it not in cold and nakedness that, according to St Paul, I am to tame my flesh and to serve God?"

Whilst St Lambert enjoyed the tranquillity of holy retirement, he wept to see the greatest part of the churches of France laid waste. When Theodoric reascended the throne he appointed Leudisius, son of Erchinoald, mayor of his palace. Ebroin at the same time left the monastery of Luxeu, and sacrilegiously broke the sacred engagements of his vows. He had already made the whole kingdom of Theodoric feel the effects of his power and tyrannical dispositions when, in 677, he became mayor of the palace to that prince, and absolute master in Neustria and Burgundy, and soon after also in Austrasia, when upon the death of Dagobert II (who was murdered by a conspiracy of his nobles, through the contrivance of Ebroin), Theodoric was acknowledged king of the whole French monarchy. Dagobert II had filled his dominions with religious foundations and, after his death, was honoured at Stenay, where he was buried, as a martyr. Ebroin, who had in this prince's lifetime extended his violences to several churches subject to him, especially that of Maestricht, after the death of this king oppressed them with greater fury, and persecuted our holy bishop without control. He was, however, overtaken by the divine vengeance; for, three years after the martyrdom of St Leodegarius, he was himself slain in 681.

Pepin of Herstal (grandson of St Pepin of Landen, by St Bega and Ansegasil), being made mayor of the palace, set himself to repair the evils done by Ebroin, expelled the usurping wicked bishops whom he had intruded into many sees, and, among many other exiled prelates, restored St Lambert to the see of Maestricht. The holy pastor, from the exercise of the most heroic virtues, to which he had devoted the time of his exile and retirement, returned to his flock animated with redoubled fervour, preaching and discharging his other functions with wonderful zeal and fruit. Finding there still remained many pagans in Taxandria, a province about Diest, in Brabant, he applied himself to convert them to the faith, softened their barbarous temper by his patience, regenerated them in the holy water of baptism, and destroyed many temples and idols. He frequently visited and conferred with St Willibrord, the apostle of Friesland. Under the weak reigns of the slothful kings, the greatest disorders prevailed in France, and every bold and powerful man set himself above the laws, and put himself at the head of a seditious faction. Of this the death of St Lambert furnishes us with a flagrant example. Pepin, who resided at his castle of Herstal, near Liège, on the Maes or Meuse, lived for some years in a scandalous adultery with a concubine named Alpais, by whom he had Charles Martel. St Lambert reproved the parties with so much earnestness that some say certain friends of the lady thence took occasion to conspire against his life. Others assign the following occasion of his death: Two brothers, by their violences and plunders of the church of Maestricht, were become insupportable and could not be restrained by the laws. At this, certain relations of St Lambert were so exasperated that, finding themselves driven to the last extremity, they slew the two brothers. Dodo, a kinsman of the two young men that were slain, a rich and powerful officer under Pepin, and related to Alpais, resolved to revenge their death upon the innocent and holy bishop, and attacked him with a considerable body of armed men, at Leodium, then a small village, now the city of Liège. St Lambert had retired to sleep after matins when Dodo with his troop broke into his house. The bishop would not suffer his two nephews nor any of his domestics to take arms to defend him, saying, "If you love me truly, love Jesus Christ, and confess your sins unto him. As for me, it is time that I go to live with him." Then prostrating himself on the ground, with his hands extended in form of a cross, he prayed, shedding many tears. The troop of enemies, entering the house, put to the sword all they met, and one of them, throwing a dart at the holy bishop, slew him. This unjust death, suffered with so great patience and meekness, joined with the eminent sanctity of the life of this holy bishop, has been looked upon as a degree of martyrdom. It happened on the 17th of September 709, St Lambert having held the episcopal dignity forty years from the time he succeeded St Theodard. His body was conveyed in a

bark to Maestricht, where it was interred in St Peter's Church. Several miracles which ensued excited the people to build a church on the spot where the house stood in which he was slain. His successor, St Hubert, translated thither his relics in 721. At the same time he removed to the same place the episcopal see, as it had been formerly transferred from Tongres to Maestricht by St Servatius.

Fortitude, which appears most heroical and most conspicuous in martyrdom, is a cardinal virtue, and the mother of many glorious virtues, as courage, greatness of soul, tranquillity of mind under all dangers, patience, longanimity, constancy, and perseverance. It is the band and support of all other virtues. As the root of a tree bears the trunk, branches, flowers, and fruit, so fortitude sustains and is the strength of the whole system of moral and Christian virtues, which sink at the first shock without it. This, therefore, is an ingredient of every perfect virtue, by which a man is ready to suffer any hardships or death, to expose himself to any dangers, and to forgo all temporal advantages, rather than swerve from the path of justice. Many form a false idea of fortitude, which is defined, "a considerate alacrity in bearing hardships and undergoing dangers." It moderates in us the two opposite extremes of fear and confidence, it teaches us reasonably to fear dangers and death, and to decline and avoid them, when nothing obliges us to expose ourselves to them; for to be foolhardy, and needlessly to precipitate ourselves upon danger, is the height of folly and vice, and the strongest mark of a corrupt and abandoned heart.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 17 :*

ST COLUMBA, a nun in the monastery of Tabanos, beheaded by the Moors, 853 : ST HILDEGARDIS, Abbess, born 1098. "She lived with Mary at the feet of Jesus and served Him like Martha, in His spiritual daughters with much sweetness and attention" : ST LANDEBERT, later called ST LAMBERT, Bishop of Maestricht and patron of Liège : ST PETER ARBUES, martyr : ST ROUEN, in Latin RODINGUS, first Abbot of Beaulieu in Argonne : ST SOCRATES and ST STEPHEN, martyrs, to whom many churches in Wales were dedicated ; they are thought to have suffered there : and THE STIGMATA OF ST FRANCIS.

#### SEPTEMBER 18

### ST THOMAS OF VILLANOVA, CONFESSOR, ARCHBISHOP OF VALENTIA, SURNAMED THE APOSTLE OF SPAIN

(A.D. 1555)

[From his life composed by Michael Salon, a native of Valentia ; the same by Jerom Canton, and Nicasius Baxius, two religious men of his order ; and chiefly from the memoirs furnished for his canonization, prefixed to his works. Pinius, t. v. Sept. p. 799.]

ST THOMAS, the glory of the church of Spain in these later ages, was born at Fuenlana, in Castile, in 1488 ; but received his surname from Villanova de los Infantes, a town where he had his education, situate about two miles from the place of his birth. His parents, Alphonsus Thomas Garcias and

Lucy Martinez, were also originally of Villanova. Their fortune was not affluent, but it contented all their wishes, and with their prudent frugality enabled them liberally to assist the poor. Instead of selling that corn which was not necessary for the subsistence of their family, they made bread of it, which they bestowed on the necessitous, and they usually observed the same rule with regard to their cattle and the rest of the produce of their small estate. This charitable disposition was the most valuable part of their son's inheritance, and proved one of the most distinguished virtues in his character during the whole course of his life. When but seven years old he studied every day by various little contrivances to do whatever lay in his power in favour of poor persons, often depriving himself of part of his meals for this purpose, and gathering together what scraps he could find at home, or whatever else he could presume on his parents' consent to give; nor were they backward in approving his conduct on such occasions, or in giving what he asked them for the indigent. This virtue was accompanied in the saint with a practice of assiduous mortification, a modesty and sweetness which charmed everyone, perfect love of purity which was never sullied, a predominant love of truth which abhorred the shadow of a lie, and a regular piety and devotion, which made him, even from his infancy, spend hours together on his knees in the church with extraordinary fervour. The first words which his parents taught him to pronounce were the names of Jesus and Mary; and during his whole life he had the most tender devotion to the mother of God. His excellent wit began to appear in the school at Villanova; and at the age of fifteen he was sent to the university of Alcala, which had been lately founded by Cardinal Ximenes, the great patron of learning, and the celebrated prime minister under Ferdinand and Charles V.

After eleven years spent at Alcala, he commenced master of arts, and was made professor of philosophy in that city, being then twenty-six years old. His father had built him a house against his return home from his studies; but this the saint, with the leave of his mother, converted into a hospital. After he had taught two years at Alcala, he was invited, with the promise of an honourable stipend, to the same employment at Salamanca, a place famous for its ancient university, which had been founded there by Alphonsus IX, King of Leon, in 1200, and for the many great men who flourished in it. He taught moral philosophy two years at Salamanca, during which time he considered what religious retreat he should make choice of. After the most mature deliberation, in which he took a review of the rules of several orders, and considered the spirit of their respective founders, he determined to enter himself among the Hermits of St Austin. He took the habit in a most rigorous and exemplary house of that institute at Salamanca, in 1518, about the time that Luther apostatized from the same order in Germany.

His behaviour in his novitiate was such as showed he had been long inured to austerities, to the renouncing his own will, and the exercises of holy contemplation. The simplicity of his behaviour in his whole conduct charmed his fellow-religious, and made them admire how he seemed totally to forget that he had been professor in a famous university. Soon after the term of his novitiate was expired, he was promoted to priestly orders in 1520, and employed in preaching the word of God and in administering the sacrament of penance. Of these functions he acquitted himself with such dignity and success that he was surnamed the apostle of Spain. Neither did he interrupt these employments, or allow himself any relaxation in his monastic rules or austerities whilst he taught, with wonderful applause, a course of divinity in the public school of the Augustinians at Salamanca. He was afterwards successively prior at Salamanca, Burgos, and Valladolid, was twice provincial of Andalusia and once of Castile; and behaved himself in all these stations with a sweetness and zeal which equally edified and gained the hearts of all his religious brethren, so that he governed them rather by the example of his most holy life than by the authority of his charge. He fell into frequent raptures at his prayers, especially at mass; and though he endeavoured to hide such graces and favours, he was not able to do it; his face, after the holy sacrifice, shining like that of Moses, sometimes dazzled the eyes of those that beheld him.

Preaching once in the cathedral church at Burgos, and reproving with zeal the vices and ingratitude of sinners, he held in his hand a crucifix, and cried out from the bottom of his heart, with a broken voice, "O Christian, look here, O Christian——" Saying this he was not able to go on, being ravished in an ecstasy. Preaching also at Valladolid on Maundy Thursday, before the Emperor Charles V, and explaining the words of St Peter to our Lord at the washing of the feet, he repeated, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Thou Lord of all creatures! thou Creator of the angels! thou God of infinite majesty, wastest my feet! The Sovereign Monarch those of a vile creature! the Master his servant's! the Innocent a sinner's feet!" Here falling into a rapture, he broke off his sermon, and remained for some time with his eyes lifted up to heaven, pouring forth abundance of tears. The emperor chose him for one of his preachers; afterwards made him one of his counsellors, received his advice as an oracle of heaven, and sometimes wrote to him when at a distance. For a proof how great the authority of our saint was with that prince, the authors of his life give the following instance. This emperor had signed an order for the execution of certain persons of quality condemned for treason; and neither the Archbishop of Toledo, nor his own son Philip, nor all the nobility of Spain, were able, by the warmest solicitations, to move him to mercy. At length our saint, at the request of Philip of Spain, went to him, and by

discoursing some time with him, prevailed upon the angry monarch to grant what he asked.

Persons of all qualities and conditions consulted him. Nor is it to be expressed with what zeal, prudence, and charity he endeavoured to advance the glory of God among men, especially among those that were committed to his charge. He was most zealous to maintain regular discipline in his Order, and a great enemy to discourses of news among his brethren, or whatever else might dissipate their minds, or introduce the world into their hermitages. When he was provincial, he visited his convents with singular diligence, and was particularly careful about four things. The first was the worship of God, that the divine service should be performed with the utmost reverence and attention; that a moderate pause should be observed in the middle of each verse by those that sung in choir; and that all things belonging to the altar should be kept with great neatness and cleanness. The second thing which he recommended was assiduous reading of the holy scriptures and pious books, with holy meditation, without which, he said, it is impossible for devotion to last long. Thirdly, he was very solicitous to settle all the religious in every convent in the most perfect concord and union, exhorting everyone to the most sincere and tender fraternal charity. Fourthly, he procured that everyone should be employed according to his talents, and in those offices for which he was fittest.

Whilst the saint was performing the visitation of his convents, he was nominated by the Emperor Charles V to the archbishopric of Granada, and commanded to repair to Toledo. He obeyed; but undertook the journey with no other view than that of declining the dignity, in which, by his urgent importunities, he succeeded according to his wish. George of Austria, uncle to the emperor, resigning some time after the archbishopric of Valentia to pass to the bishopric of Liege, the emperor, who was then in Flanders, thought of not venturing to offer him this see because he knew how grievous a mortification it would be to his humility. He therefore ordered his secretary to draw up a placit, or letter of recommendation or nomination, for him to sign in favour of a certain religious man of the Order of St Jerom. Afterwards, finding that the secretary had put down the name of F. Thomas, of Villanova, he asked the reason. The secretary answered that he thought he had heard his name, but would easily rectify the mistake. "By no means," said the emperor; "this has happened by a particular providence of God. Let us, therefore, follow his will." So he signed the placit for St Thomas, and it was forthwith sent him to Valladolid, where he was prior. The saint wept bitterly upon receiving the news, and used all means possible to excuse himself.

Pope Paul II sent the bull for his consecration, and that ceremony was performed at Valladolid by Cardinal John of Tavera, Archbishop of Toledo. The saint set out very early next morning for Valentia. His



mother, who had converted his house into a hospital for the use of the poor and sick, and resolved to spend the rest of her days in their service, entreated him to take Villanova in his way, that she might have the satisfaction of seeing him before she died. But the holy bishop, having recommended that affair to God, according to his usual custom, went directly to his diocese, being persuaded that his present character obliged him to postpone all other considerations to that of hastening to the flock committed to his care. He travelled on foot, in his monastic habit, which was very old, with no other hat than one he had worn ever since his profession, accompanied by one religious man of his Order, and two servants. He took possession of his cathedral on the first day of the ensuing year, 1545, which he was prevailed upon to do with the usual ceremonies, amidst the rejoicings and acclamations of the people. But when he was led to the throne prepared for him in the church, he cast away the cushions and silk tapestry, fell upon his knees on the bare floor, embraced the foot of the cross, and adored our Lord, pouring forth a torrent of tears; and before he rose up he humbly kissed the ground. The chapter, in consideration of his poverty, made him a present of four thousand ducats towards furnishing his house, which he accepted of in a humble and civil manner, and thanked them for their kindness; but he immediately sent the money to the great hospital, with an order to lay it out in repairing the house, and for the use of the poor patients.

It is often said that "honours change manners"; but our saint kept not only the same perfect humility of heart, but as much as possible the same exterior marks of a sovereign contempt of himself and all worldly vanity. He went almost as meanly apparelled as before; and even kept for some years the very habit which he brought from his monastery, which he sometimes mended himself, as he had been wont to do in his convent. One of his canons surprising him one day in the fact, said he wondered he would so meanly employ his time, which a tailor would save him for a trifle. The servant of God said that he was still a religious man, and that that trifle would feed some poor man; but he desired him to tell nobody of what he saw him doing. When he was pressed by them to put himself into a dress and equipage suitable to his dignity, his answer was that he had made a vow of poverty; and that his authority did not depend upon his dress or appearance, but was to be supported by his zeal and vigilance. With much ado his canons gained so far upon him that he cast away his woollen hat and wore one of silk. Upon which he used afterwards sometimes to show his hat, and merrily say, "Behold my episcopal dignity; my masters, the canons, judged it necessary that I should wear this silk hat, that I might be numbered among the archbishops." The frugality of his table was not less extraordinary, and he continued to observe the fasts and abstinence prescribed by his rule; nor would he ever suffer any

expensive fish to be bought for his table; saying the superfluous price would feast some poor person, and that he was not master but only dispenser of the goods of the church. In Advent and Lent, upon Wednesdays and Fridays, and on vigils, he contented himself with a little bread and water, fasting till night.

He discharged all the duties of a good pastor, and visited the churches of his diocese, preaching everywhere, both in the towns and villages, with such zeal and affection that the words which came from his mouth seemed so many flashes of lightning or claps of thunder. His sermons were followed with a wonderful change of the manners and lives of men in all places he visited, so that one might say he was a new apostle or prophet raised by God to reform that people. Having ended his visitation, he assembled a provincial council, where, with the advice of his fellow-bishops, he made holy ordinances to cut off the abuses he had taken notice of in his visitation, especially to establish a perfect reformation of his clergy. To effect that of his own chapter it cost him much difficulty and time; though he at last gained his point. He obtained of God several wonderful conversions of obstinate sinners and malefactors, especially of two wicked priests. One of these he had conjured, in the most tender and vehement expressions, to remember how dear a price his soul cost our Redeemer, and finding him not sufficiently softened, he threw himself down before a crucifix, and, pouring out a deluge of tears, uncovered his back and tore his body with a discipline, so that his garments were all stained with his blood, which charity moved the other to begin to weep for himself, and to cast himself at his feet, beseeching him to forbear exercising that cruelty against himself, saying, "It is I that have sinned, and that deserve all punishment,"<sup>1</sup> &c.

St Thomas was most bountiful and tender towards all his servants. His bishopric was worth eighteen thousand ducats per annum: two thousand of which were paid to Prince George of Austria as a pension reserved to him upon his resignation; twelve thousand the saint gave to the poor, not reserving one penny for the following year; and he allowed himself only four thousand to defray all the expenses of his family, repairs of his palace, &c. There came to his door every day about five hundred poor people, and each of them received an alms, which was ordinarily bread and pottage, with a cup of wine and a piece of money. He took all poor orphans under his particular care; and for the space of eleven years that he was archbishop, not one poor maid was married who was not helped by his charity. He brought up all the foundling infants in his diocese with the tenderness of a careful mother; often visited them all, and gave extraordinary recompenses to those nurses that were particularly tender and diligent. To his porters, to make them more diligent in finding

<sup>1</sup> See Rodericus a Cygnâ archiep. Bracar. lib. de confessor. solicitant. qu. 13, n. 38.

children that were exposed by their parents, he gave a crown for every foundling they brought him. When, in 1550, a pirate had plundered a town in his diocese, near the sea-coast, the archbishop immediately sent four thousand ducats, and cloth worth as much more, to furnish the inhabitants with necessaries, and to ransom the captives.

Nor was he only the support of the poor himself, but he engaged the great lords, and all that were rich, to make their grandeur appear, not by pomp and vanities, but by becoming the fathers and protectors of their vassals, and by their profuse liberality to the necessitous. He exhorted them to be richer in mercy and charity than they were in earthly possessions. "Answer me, O sinner," he would say, "what can you purchase with your money better, or more necessary, than the redemption of your sins?" At other times he would say, "If you desire that God should hear your prayers, hear the voice of the poor. If you desire that God should prevent your wants, prevent those of the indigent, without waiting for them to importune you; especially anticipate the necessities of those who are ashamed to beg." His charity towards his neighbour, and all his other virtues, received their perfection from the most ardent love of God which burnt in his pure preast, and which he expressed both by works and by the most tender words and sweet sighs. "Thou commandest me, O Lord," said he sometimes, in imitation of St Austin, "to love thee in all things, and above all things; after having received so many and so great favours, do I stand in need of a command to love thee! Ah! my God, thou confoundest me by this precept. But, O infinitely sweet and delicious command! O light burden! I return Thee immortal thanks, O my God, for having obliged me by so holy and so desirable a law to love Thee. What could be so agreeable and pleasant, so just and so glorious, as to love Thee? Is it possible that any creature capable of knowing Thee should not love Thee? If I were forbid to love Thee this ought to seem impossible and intolerable to me."

St Thomas not being able, through the weakness of his health, to assist in person at the council of Trent, deputed thither the Bishop of Huësca in his place. Most of the Spanish bishops that went repaired first to Valentia to receive his advice. The saint lived in perpetual fear and apprehension under the grievous obligations of the episcopal charge, and used to say that "he was never so much afraid lest he should be blotted out of the number of the predestinated as since he had been enrolled in the list of bishops." The blessed man, having been forewarned by a vision that he should die on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, was taken ill of a quinsy, attended with a violent fever, on the 29th of August. He began his immediate preparation for his passage by a general confession of his very least faults, which he made with many tears, as if he had been the greatest of all sinners. Then he received the viaticum:

on which occasion, by a most pathetic exhortation which he made, he moved all that were present to weep bitterly. And having commanded all the money then in his possession (which amounted to four thousand ducats) to be distributed among the poor in all the parishes of the city, he then ordered all his goods to be given to the rector of his college, except the bed on which he lay. Being desirous to go naked out of the world, he gave this bed also to the jailer, for the use of prisoners, but borrowed it of him till such time as he should expire. Understanding that some money had been brought in for him, he caused it to be immediately sent to the poor at midnight. On the eighth of September, in the morning, perceiving his strength to decay, he caused the passion of our Lord according to St John to be read to him, during which he frequently lifted up his eyes bathed in tears towards a crucifix. Then he ordered mass to be said in his presence, and after the consecration, recited the psalm, "*In te, Domine, speravi,*" &c., streams of tears falling from his eyes. After the priest's communion he said that verse, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit"; at which words he rendered his soul into the hands of God, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, the eleventh of his episcopal dignity, of our Lord 1555. He was buried, according to his desire, in the Church of the Austin Friars, at Valentia; was beatified by Paul V in 1618, and canonized by Alexander VII in 1658. His festival was appointed to be celebrated on the 18th of September.

Nothing can be more vehement or more tender than his exhortation to divine love. "O wonderful beneficence!" he cries out; "God promises us heaven for the recompense of his love. Is not his love itself a great reward? a blessing the most desirable, the most amiable, and the most sweet! Yet a recompense, and so immense a recompense, further waits upon it. O wonderful excess of goodness! Thou givest thy love, and for this thy love thou bestowest upon us paradise. O omnipotent Jesus, give me what thou commandest. For though to love Thee be of all things the most sweet; yet it is above the reach and strength of nature. I am, notwithstanding, inexcusable, if I do not love Thee; for thou grantest thy love to all who desire or ask it. I cannot see without light: yet if I shut my eyes in the midst of the noonday light, the fault is in me, not in the sun."<sup>1</sup>

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 18:*

ST FERREOL, martyr, a tribune in Gaul, who was secretly a Christian; apprehended on suspicion, he refused to sacrifice to the gods: ST JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO, a disciple of St Francis, who, born of poor parents, was treated with great severity, "to inure him to an austere life"; after being ordained, he passed five years living only on herbs and dried fruits: ST METHODIUS, Bishop of Tyre, an illustrious Father of the Church: and ST THOMAS OF VILLANOVA, Archbishop of Valentia, 1555, "the glory of the Church in Spain"; he was "most bountiful and tender to all his servants."

<sup>1</sup> *Serm. super Diliges Dominum, etc.*

SEPTEMBER 19

## ST JANUARIUS AND OTHER MARTYRS

(A.D. 305)

[From Bede and other Martyrologists. The modern acts of St Januarius were compiled by John, a deacon belonging to the church of Naples, about the year 923, who complains that the memoirs he made use of had been adulterated by certain superfluous circumstances foisted into them. See Tillemont, t. v. and F. Putignano Soc. J. de Redivivo, Sanguine D. Januarii, Neapoli, 1723, in three volumes quarto; Stilting, t. vi. Sept. p. 762, et seq.]

ST JANUARIUS, a native some say of Naples, others of Benevento, was bishop of this latter city when the persecution of Diocletian broke out. Sosius, deacon of Miseno, Proculus, deacon of Puzzuoli, and Eutyches, or Eutychetes, and Acutius, eminent laymen, were imprisoned at Puzzuoli for the faith by an order of Dracontius, governor of Campania, before whom they had confessed their faith. Sosius, by his singular wisdom and sanctity, had been worthy of the intimate friendship of St Januarius. Upon the news that this great servant of God and several others were fallen into the hands of the persecutors, the good bishop determined to make them a visit, in order to comfort and encourage them, and provide them with every spiritual succour to arm them for their great conflict: no fear of torments or danger of his life could terrify him; and martyrdom was his recompense. He did not escape the notice of the inquisitive keepers, who gave information that an eminent person from Benevento had visited the Christian prisoners. Timothy, who had just succeeded Dracontius in the government of that district of Italy, gave orders that Januarius, whom he found to be the person, should be apprehended and brought before him at Nola, the usual place of his residence; which was done accordingly. Festus, the bishop's deacon, and Desiderius, a lector of his church, were taken up as they were making him a visit. They had a share in the interrogatories and torments which the good bishop underwent at Nola. Some time after the governor went to Puzzuoli, and these three confessors, loaded with heavy irons, were made to walk before his chariot to the town, where they were thrown into the same prison where the four martyrs already mentioned were detained; they had been condemned, by an order from the emperor, to be torn in pieces by wild beasts, and were then lying in expectation of the execution of their sentence. The day after the arrival of St Januarius and his two companions, all these champions of Christ were exposed to be devoured by the beasts in the amphitheatre; but none of the savage animals could be provoked to touch them. The people were amazed, but imputed their preservation to art-magic: and the martyrs were condemned to be beheaded. This sentence was executed near Puzzuoli, as Bede testifies, and the martyrs were decently interred near that town. Some time after the Christian faith was become triumphant, towards the year 400, their precious relics were removed.

The city of Naples was so happy as to get possession of the relics of St Januarius. During the wars of the Normans they were removed, first to Benevento, and some time after to the abbey of Monte-Vergine; but, in 1497, they were brought back to Naples, which city has long honoured him as principal patron. Among many miraculous deliverances which it ascribes to the intercession of this great saint, none is looked upon as more remarkable than its preservation from the fiery eruptions of Mount Vesuvius, now called La Somma, which is only eight miles distant, and which has often threatened the entire destruction of this city, both by the prodigious quantities of burning sand, ashes, and stones which it throws up on those occasions to a much greater distance than Naples; and, by a torrent of burning sulphur, nitre, calcined stones, and other materials, which like a liquid fire has sometimes gushed from that volcano and, digging itself a channel (which has sometimes been two or three miles broad), rolled its flaming waves through the valley into the sea, destroying towns and villages in its way, and often passing near Naples. Some of these eruptions, which in the fifth and seventh centuries threatened this city with destruction by the clouds of ashes which they raised, are said to have darkened the sky as far as Constantinople, and struck terror into the inhabitants of that capital.<sup>1</sup> The intercession of St Januarius was implored at Naples on those occasions, and the divine mercy so wonderfully interposed in causing these dreadful evils suddenly to cease thereupon, especially in 685, Bennet II being pope, and Justinian the Younger emperor, that the Greeks instituted a feast in honour of St Januarius, with two yearly solemn processions to return thanks to God. The protection of the city of Naples from this dreadful volcano by the same means was most remarkable in the years 1631 and 1707.

The standing miracle, as it is called by Baronius, of the blood of St Januarius liquefying and boiling up at the approach of the martyr's head is likewise very famous. In a rich chapel, called the Treasury, in the great church at Naples, are preserved the blood, in two very old glass vials, and the head of St Januarius. The blood is congealed, and of a dark colour; but when brought in sight of the head, though at a considerable distance, it melts, bubbles up and, upon the least motion, flows on any side. It happens equally in all seasons of the year, and in variety of circumstances. The usual times when it is performed are the feast of St Januarius, the 19th of September; that of the translation of his relics (when they were brought from Puzzuoli to Naples), the Sunday which falls next to the calends of May; and the 20th day of December, on which, in 1631, a terrible eruption of Mount Vesuvius was extinguished, upon invoking the patronage of this martyr. The same is done on extraordinary occasions

<sup>1</sup> See Marcellin. in Chron. ad. ann. 471. An ancient homily quoted by Baronius, Baillet, and Putignano.

at the discretion of the archbishop.<sup>1</sup> This miraculous solution and ebullition of the blood of St Januarius is mentioned by Pope Pius II when he speaks of the reign of Alphonsus I of Arragon, King of Naples, in 1450: Angelus Cato, an eminent physician of Salerno, and others mention it in the same century. Almost two hundred years before that epoch, historians take notice that King Charles I of Anjou, coming to Naples, the archbishop brought out the head and blood of this martyr. The continuator of the chronicle of Maraldus says the same was done upon the arrival of King Roger, who venerated these relics, in 1140. Falco of Benevento relates the same thing. From several circumstances this miracle is traced much higher, and it is said to have regularly happened on the annual feast of St Januarius, and on that of the translation of his relics, from the time of that translation, about the year 400.

Miracles recorded in holy scripture are revealed facts, and an object of faith. Other miracles are not considered in the same light; neither does our faith rest upon them as upon the former, though they illustrate and confirm it; nor do they demand or admit any higher assent than that which prudence requires, and that which is due to the evidence or human authority upon which they depend. When such miracles are propounded, they are not to be rashly admitted; the evidence of the fact and circumstances ought to be examined to the bottom and duly weighed; where that fails, it is the part of prudence to suspend or refuse our assent. Also if it appears doubtful whether an effect be natural or proceed from a supernatural interposition, our assent ought to lean according to the greater weight of probability, and God, who is author of all events, natural and supernatural, is always to be glorified. If human evidence set the certainty of a miracle above the reach of any doubt, it must more powerfully excite us to raise our minds to God in sentiments of humble adoration, love, and praise.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 19 :*

ST EUSTOCHIUS, Bishop of Tours, a man of eminent virtue: ST JANUARIUS, Bishop of Benevento, AND HIS COMPANIONS, martyrs, 305; St Januarius is greatly honoured in his relics in Naples: ST LUCY, virgin, a daughter of a king of the Scots, who retired to France to serve God in obscurity: ST PELEUS, ST PA-TERMUTHES, AND THEIR COMPANIONS, martyrs, including ELIAS and NILUS, who, after being condemned to the mines in Palestine, built little oratories there wherein they comforted themselves with divine service; four of them were burned alive: ST SEQUANUS or SEINE, Abbot: and ST THEODORE, Archbishop of Canterbury after St Augustine.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Addison, Dr Middleton, and several German Protestants have tried their skill in forming objections to this miracle, which some of them would fain ascribe to the heat of the priest's hands, others to the steams of the church or lamps, others think it may be some chemical composition of a soluble nature. All these surmises suppose a fraud or juggle in the priests; but how will these authors persuade us that so many most holy, venerable, and learned persons have been and are hypocrites, impostors, and jugglers? The chemical secret would be not only a notorious fraud but also a wonderful discovery. The variation of the circumstances in which this miracle happens removes the suspicion of this or such causes as the heat of the hands and the steam of the place. Nor can these be altered by the head being present, &c.

SEPTEMBER 20

## ST EUSTACHIUS AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

[See the Bollandists, t. vi. Sept. p. 107.]

ST EUSTACHIUS, called by the Greeks Eustathius, and before his conversion named Placidus, was a nobleman who suffered martyrdom at Rome, about the reign of Adrian, together with his wife Theopista, called before her baptism Tatiana, and two sons, Agapius and Theopistus. The ancient sacramentaries mention, in the prayer for the festival of St Eustachius, his profuse charities to the poor, on whom he bestowed all his large possessions some time before he laid down his life for his faith. An ancient church in Rome was built in his honour, with the title of a Diacony; the same now gives title to a cardinal. His body lay deposited in this church till, in the twelfth age, it was translated to that of St Denis, near Paris.

How noble is it to see integrity and virtue triumphing over interest, passion, racks, and death, and setting the whole world at defiance! To see a great man preferring the least duty of justice, truth, or religion to the favour or menace of princes; readily quitting estate, friends, country, and life rather than consent to anything against his conscience; and at the same time, meek, humble, and modest in his sufferings; forgiving from his heart and tenderly loving his most unjust and treacherous enemies and persecutors! Passion and revenge often make men furious: and the lust of power, worldly honour, applause, or wealth may prompt them to brave dangers; but these passions leave them weak and dastardly in other cases, and are themselves the basest slavery and most grievous crimes and misery. Religion is the only basis on which true magnanimity and courage can stand. It so enlightens the mind as to set a man above all human events, and to preserve him in all changes and trials steady and calm in himself; it secures him against the errors, the injustices, and frowns of the world; is by its powerful motives the strongest spur to all generous actions, and under afflictions and sufferings a source of unalterable peace and overflowing joy, which spring from an assured confidence that God's will is always just and holy, and that he will be its protector and rewarder.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 20:*

ST AGAPETUS, a native of Rome who succeeded Pope John II; "He healed by mildness the wounds made by dissension": ST EUSTACHIUS (called by the Greeks EUSTATHIUS) AND COMPANIONS. This saint was called Placidus before his conversion; he was a nobleman who suffered at Rome with his wife, THEOPISTA, and their two sons AGAPIUS and THEOPISTUS. St Eustachius is said to have been eminent for his profuse charities to the poor.



SEPTEMBER 21

## ST MATTHEW, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

[Matt. ix. ; Mark ii. ; Luke v. See Tillemont, Calmet, Ceillier, Hammond, &amp;c.]

ST MATTHEW is called by two evangelists Levi, both which names are of Jewish extraction. The latter he bore before his conversion, the other he seems to have taken after it, to show that he had renounced his profession and was become a new man. St Mark calls him the son of Alphæus; but the conjecture which some form from hence, that he was brother to St James the Less, has not the very shadow of probability. He seems to have been a Galilæan by birth, and was by profession a publican, or gatherer of taxes for the Romans.

Among the Jews these publicans were more infamous and odious, because this nation looked upon them as enemies to their privilege of natural freedom which God had given them, and as persons defiled by their frequent conversation and dealing with the pagans, and as conspiring with the Romans to entail slavery upon their countrymen. Hence the Jews universally abhorred them, regarded their estates or money as the fortunes of notorious thieves, banished them from their communion in all religious worship, and shunned them in all affairs of civil society and commerce. Tertullian is certainly mistaken when he affirms that none but Gentiles were employed in this sordid office, as St Jerom demonstrates from several passages in the gospels.<sup>1</sup> And it is certain that St Matthew was a Jew, though a publican. His office is said to have particularly consisted in gathering customs of commodities that came by the lake Genesareth or Tiberias, and a toll which passengers paid that came by water; of which mention is made by Jewish writers. Hence the Hebrew gospel published by Munster renders the word Publican in this place by "The Lord of the Passage." St Mark says that St Matthew kept his office or toll-booth by the side of the lake, where he sat at the receipt of custom.

Jesus, having lately cured a famous paralytic, went out of Capharnaum, and walked on the banks of the lake or sea of Genesareth, teaching the people that flocked after him. Here he espied Matthew sitting in his custom-house, whom he called to come and follow him. The man was rich, enjoyed a very lucrative post, was a wise and prudent man, and perfectly understood what his compliance would cost him, and what an exchange he made of wealth for poverty. But he overlooked all these considerations, and left all his interests and relations to become our Lord's disciple, and to embrace a spiritual kind of commerce or traffic. We cannot suppose that he was before wholly unacquainted with our Saviour's person

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 146, ad Damas.

or doctrine, especially as his custom-office was near Capharnaum, and his house seems to have been in that city, where Christ had resided for some time, had preached and wrought many miracles, by which he was in some measure prepared to receive the impression which the call of Christ made upon him. St Jerom says that a certain amiable brightness and air of majesty which shone in the countenance of our divine Redeemer pierced his soul and strongly attracted him. But the great cause of his wonderful conversion was, as Bede remarks, that "He who called him outwardly by his word, at the same time moved him inwardly by the invisible instinct of his grace." We must earnestly entreat this same gracious Saviour that he would vouchsafe to touch our hearts with the like powerful interior call, that we may be perfectly converted to him. He often raises his voice in the secret of our hearts; but by putting wilful obstacles we are deaf to it, and the seed of salvation is often choked in our souls.

This apostle, at the first invitation, broke all ties; forsook his riches, his family, his worldly concerns, his pleasures, and his profession. His conversion was sincere and perfect, manifesting itself by the following marks. First, it admitted no deliberation or delay: to balance one moment between God and sin, or the world, is to resist the divine call and to lose the offered grace. Secondly, it was courageous; surmounting and bearing down all opposition which his passions or the world could raise in his way. Thirdly, it was constant; the apostle from that moment looked no more back, but, following Christ with fervour, persevered to the end, marching every day forwards with fresh vigour. It is the remark of St Gregory that those apostles who left their boats and nets to follow Christ were sometimes afterwards found in the same employment of fishing, from which they were called: but St Matthew never returned to the custom-house, because it was a dangerous profession, and an occasion of avarice, oppression, and extortion. St Jerom and St Chrysostom take notice that St Mark and St Luke mention our apostle by the name of Levi, when they speak of his former profession of publican, as if it were to cover and keep out of sight the remembrance of this apostle's sin, or at least to touch it tenderly; but our evangelist openly calls himself Matthew, by which name he was then known in the church, being desirous, out of humility, to publish his former infamy and sin, and to proclaim the excess of the divine mercy, which had made an apostle of a publican. The other evangelists, by mentioning him in his former dishonourable course of life under the name of Levi, teach us that we ought to treat penitent sinners with all modesty and tenderness; it being against the laws of religion, justice, and charity to upbraid and reproach a convert with errors or sins which God himself has forgiven and effaced, so as to declare that he no longer remembers them, and for which the devil himself, with all his malice, can no longer accuse or reproach him.



## ST. MATTHEUS

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Matthew tells his story in his own Gospel. He was a publican, a gatherer of taxes, he records, living at Capharnaum. He gave up everything to follow Jesus and remained with Him until the end. After the Ascension Matthew preached widely throughout Judea before going to the countries of the East where he was martyred.

St Matthew, upon his conversion, to show that he was not discontented at his change, but looked upon it as his greatest happiness, entertained our Lord and his disciples at a great dinner in his house whither he invited his friends, especially those of his late profession, doubtless hoping that by our Saviour's divine conversation they also might be converted. The Pharisees carped at this conduct of Christ, in eating with publicans and sinners. Our divine Saviour answered their malicious secret suggestions, that he came for the sick, not for the sound and healthy, or for those who conceited themselves so, and imagined they stood in no need of a physician; and he put them in mind that God prefers acts of mercy and charity, especially in reclaiming sinners, and doing good to souls, before ritual observances, as the more necessary and noble precept, to which other laws were subordinate. Christ came from heaven, and clothed himself with our mortality, in the bowels of the most tender compassion and of his infinite mercy for sinners. he burnt continually with the most ardent thirst for their salvation, and it was his greatest delight to converse with those that were sunk in the deepest abyss, in order to bring them to repentance and salvation. How affectionately he cherished and how tenderly he received those that were sincerely converted to him he has expressed by the most affecting parables, and of this St Matthew is, among others, an admirable instance.

Eusebius and St Epiphanius tell us that after our Lord's ascension St Matthew preached several years in Judea and the neighbouring countries till the dispersion of the apostles; and that a little before it he wrote his gospel, or short history of our blessed Redeemer, at the entreaty of the Jewish converts and, as St Epiphanius says, at the command of the other apostles. That he compiled it before the dispersion appears not only because it was written before the other gospels, but also because St Bartholomew took a copy of it with him into India, and left it there. Christ nowhere appears to have given any charge about committing to writing his history or divine doctrine; particular accidents gave the occasions. St Matthew wrote his gospel to satisfy the converts of Palestine;<sup>1</sup> St Mark, at the pressing entreaties of the faithful at Rome;<sup>2</sup> St Luke, to oppose false histories;<sup>3</sup> St John, at the request of the bishops of Asia, to leave an authentic testimony against the heresies of Cerinthus and Ebion.<sup>4</sup> It was, nevertheless, by a special inspiration of the Holy Ghost that this work was undertaken and executed by each of them. The gospels are the most excellent part of the sacred writings. For in them Christ teaches us, not by his prophets, but by his own divine mouth, the great lessons of faith and of eternal life; and in the history of his holy life the most perfect pattern of sanctity is set before our eyes for us to copy after. The gospel

<sup>1</sup> Eus. lib. iii. c. 24; St Hieron. in Catal.

<sup>2</sup> Luke i. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. lib. ii. c. 15.

<sup>4</sup> St Hieron. Prol. in Matt.; St Epiph. hæc. 31.

of St Matthew descends to a fuller and more particular detail in the actions of Christ than the other three, but from chap. v. to chap. xiv. he often differs from them in the series of his narration, neglecting the order of time, that those instructions might be related together which have a closer affinity with each other. This evangelist enlarges chiefly on our Saviour's lessons of morality, and describes his temporal or human generation, in which the promises made to Abraham and David concerning the Messias to be born of their seed were fulfilled; which argument was a particular inducement to the Jews to believe in him.

St Matthew, after having made a great harvest of souls in Judea, went to preach the faith to the barbarous and uncivilized nations of the East. He was a person much devoted to heavenly contemplation and led an austere life, using a very slender and mean diet; for he ate no flesh, satisfying nature with herbs, roots, seeds, and berries, as St Clement of Alexandria assures us.<sup>1</sup> St Ambrose says<sup>2</sup> that God opened to him the country of the Persians. Rufinus<sup>3</sup> and Socrates<sup>4</sup> tell us that he carried the gospel into Ethiopia, meaning probably the southern and eastern parts of Asia. St Paulinus mentions<sup>5</sup> that he ended his course in Parthia. Venantius Fortunatus relates that he suffered martyrdom at Nadabar, a city in those parts. According to Dorotheus, he was honourably interred at Hierapolis in Parthia. His relics were long ago brought into the West. Pope Gregory VII, in a letter to the Bishop of Salerno in 1080, testifies that they were then kept in a church which bore his name in that city. They still remain in the same place.

St Irenæus, St Jerom, St Austin, and other fathers find a figure of the four evangelists in the four mystical animals represented in Ezechiel<sup>6</sup> and in the Apocalypse of St John.<sup>7</sup> The eagle is generally said to represent St John, who in the first lines of his gospel soars up to the contemplation of the eternal generation of the Word. The calf agrees to St Luke, who begins his gospel with the mention of the priesthood. St Austin makes the lion the symbol of St Matthew, who explains the royal dignity of Christ; but others give it to St Mark, and the man to St Matthew, who begins his gospel with Christ's human generation.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 21 :*

\*St LO, in Latin LAUDUS, Bishop of Coutances in Normandy: THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF COREA: ST MAURA, virgin, nobly born at Troyes; her prayers in her youth obtained the wonderful conversion of her father: ST MATTHEW, Apostle and Evangelist.

<sup>1</sup> Pædag. lib. ii. c. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Carm. 26.

<sup>2</sup> In Ps. 45.

<sup>6</sup> Ezech. i. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. x. c. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Apoc. iv. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. i. c. 19.

SEPTEMBER 22

## ST MAURICE AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

(A.D. 286)

[From the authentic account of their martyrdom, compiled a hundred and fifty years after it happened, by St Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons, who quotes their acts, and the relation of Isaac, the holy Bishop of Geneva. This last-mentioned prelate received the particulars of this history of these martyrs from Theodore, Bishop of Octodurum (in whose diocese they suffered), who assisted at the council of Aquileia in 381, and must have seen persons who had been eye-witnesses, or at least lived upon the spot when the inhuman butchery was committed.]

DIOCLETIAN, in the beginning of his reign, was no enemy to the Christian religion, and employed many who openly professed it near his own person, and in posts of trust and importance, as Eusebius assures us. Yet even private governors and the giddy populace were at liberty to indulge the blindest passion and fury against the servants of Christ; and Maximian, on certain extraordinary occasions, stained his progresses with the blood of many martyrs. The Thebean legion was one of those which were sent by Diocletian out of the East to compose his army for his expedition into Gaul. Maximian, in crossing the Alps, made a halt with his army some days that the soldiers might repose themselves in their tedious march, while some detachments filed off towards Triers. They were then arrived at Octodurum, at that time a considerable city on the Rhone, above the lake of Geneva, now a village called Martignac, or Martigni, in the Valais. Its episcopal see seems to have been transferred to Sion in the sixth century. Here Maximian issued out an order that the whole army should join in offering sacrifice to the gods for the success of their expedition. The Thebean legion hereupon withdrew itself and encamped near Agaunum, now called St Maurice, three leagues from Octodurum. The emperor sent them repeated orders to return to the camp and join in the sacrifices; and upon their constant and unanimous refusal he commanded them to be decimated. Thus every tenth man was put to death, according as the lot fell; the rest exhorting one another all the while to perseverance. After the first decimation a second was commanded, unless the soldiers obeyed the orders given; but they cried out over their whole camp that they would rather suffer all extremities than do anything contrary to their holy religion. They were principally encouraged by three of their general officers, Maurice or Mauricius, Exuperius, and Candidus.

The emperor sent fresh threats that it was in vain they confided in their multitude; and that if they persisted in their disobedience not a man among them should escape death. The legion, by the advice of their generous leaders, answered him by a dutiful remonstrance, the substance of which was as follows: "We are your soldiers, but are servants of the true God. We owe you military service and obedience; but we cannot renounce Him who is our Creator and Master, and also yours, even whilst

you reject him. You command us to punish the Christians: behold, we are all such. We confess God the Father, author of all things, and his Son, Jesus Christ. We have seen our companions slain without lamenting them, and we rejoice at their honour. Neither this extremity to which we are reduced, nor any provocation, hath tempted us to revolt. We have arms in our hands, but we do not resist, because we had rather die innocent than live by any sin."

This legion consisted of about six thousand six hundred men, who were all well armed, and might have sold their lives very dear; but they had learned to give to God what is God's and to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, and they showed their courage more in dying than they had ever done in the most hazardous enterprises. Maximian, having no hopes of overcoming their constancy, commanded his whole army to surround them and cut them to pieces. They made no resistance, but, dropping their arms, suffered themselves to be butchered like innocent sheep, without opening their mouths, except mutually to encourage one another; and not one out of so great a number failed in courage to the last. The ground was covered with their dead bodies, and streams of blood flowed on every side. Maximian gave the spoils of the slain to his army for their booty, and the soldiers were making merry over them when Victor, a veteran soldier who belonged not to that troop, happened to pass by. They invited him to eat with them, but he, detesting their feast, offered to retire. At this the soldiers inquired if he was also a Christian. He answered that he was, and would always continue one: upon which they instantly fell upon him and slew him. Ursus and Victor, two straggling soldiers of this legion, were found at Solodora, now Soleure, and massacred upon the spot. Their relics are still preserved at Soleure. There suffered at Turin, about the same time, SS. Octavius, Adventitus, and Solutor, who are celebrated by St Maximus in his sermons, and by Ennodius of Pavia in his poems. These martyrs were styled by Fortunatus, "The happy legion." Their festival is mentioned on this day in the Martyrologies of St Jerom, Bede, and others.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 22 :*

ST EMMERAN, Patron of Ratisbon, killed in an inhuman manner by assassins who had been incited thereto owing to the slanders of a wicked woman; he died with incredible tranquillity of soul; he was Bishop of Poitiers, 653 : ST MAURICE AND HIS COMPANIONS, martyrs, soldiers of the famous Thebean Legion: and ST THOMAS OF VILLANOVA, Bishop of Valentia, an Augustinian; died, 1555.

SEPTEMBER 23

ST LINUS, POPE, MARTYR.

[See Euseb. lib. iii. c. 2; St Epiphanius. Hær. 27, c. 6.]

ST LINUS was the immediate successor of St Peter in the see of Rome, as St Irenæus, Eusebius, St Epiphanius, St Optatus, St Austin, and others

assure us. Tertullian says<sup>1</sup> that St Clement was appointed by St Peter to be his successor; but either he declined that dignity till St Linus and St Cletus had preceded him in it, or he was at first only vicar of St Peter, to govern under him the Gentile converts, whilst that apostle presided over the whole church, yet so as to be chiefly taken up in instructing the Jewish converts, and in preaching abroad.<sup>2</sup> St Linus, succeeding St Peter after his martyrdom, sat twelve years, and is named among the martyrs in the canon of the Roman mass, which is certainly older in this part than the sacramentary of Gelasius, and of the greatest authority in this point. It is not indeed impossible that he might be called a martyr on account of his sufferings for the faith, without dying by the sword. St Linus was buried on the Vatican hill, near the tomb of St Peter.

This saint distinguished himself among the illustrious disciples of the apostles, who were formed upon their model to perfect virtue, and filled with the holy spirit of the gospel.

### ST THECLA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

[See Tillemont, t. ii. p. 60, who has gleaned the following circumstances of the life of this glorious saint from the writings of many primitive fathers, no genuine acts of this holy virgin being extant. Tertullian and St Jerom inform us that St John deposed a priest at Ephesus for having forged the false acts of SS. Paul and Thecla, and a book under that title was condemned by Pope Gelasius. See Stilling the Bollandist, t. vi. Sept. p. 546. Her Greek acts published at Antwerp, in 1608, are mentioned by Lambecius at Vienna. Catal. Bib. Vindeb. t. viii. p. 243; others more ancient are given us by Grabe Spicil. Patr. t. i. p. 95. See Fabricius Bibl. Græc. t. ix. p. 146.]

ST THECLA, whose name has always been most famous in the church, and who is styled by St Isidore of Pelusium and all the Greeks the protomartyr of her sex, was one of the brightest ornaments of the apostolic age. She was a native of Isauria or Lycaonia. St Methodius, in his "Banquet of Virgins," assures us that she was well versed in profane philosophy and in the various branches of polite literature, and he exceedingly commends her eloquence, and the ease, strength, sweetness, and modesty of her discourse. He says that she received her instructions in divine and evangelical knowledge from St Paul, and was eminent for her skill in sacred science. The same father extols the vehemence of her love for Christ, which she exerted on many great occasions, especially in the conflicts which she sustained with the zeal and courage of a martyr, and with the strength of body equal to the vigour of her mind. St Austin, St Epiphanius, St Ambrose, and other fathers mention that St Paul, by his preaching, converted her to the faith at Iconium, probably about the year 45, and that his discourses kindled in her breast a vehement love of holy virginity, which state she eagerly embraced, in an age which seemed very tender for so great a resolution. Upon this holy change she broke off a treaty of

<sup>1</sup> PRÆSCR. c. 32.

<sup>2</sup> See Hammond, Pearson, Cave, &c



marriage which had been set on foot by her parents with a rich, comely, and amiable young nobleman, of one of the best families in the country.

St Gregory of Nyssa says<sup>1</sup> that this blessed virgin undertook the sacrifice of herself by giving death to the flesh, practising on it great austerities, extinguishing in herself all earthly affections and subduing her passions by a life dead to the senses, so that nothing seemed to remain living in her but reason and spirit: the whole world seemed dead to her as she was to the world. St Chrysostom, or an author of the same age, whose homily is attributed to that father, lets us know that her parents perceiving an alteration in her conduct, without being acquainted with the motive upon which she acted, plied her with the strongest arguments, mixed with commands, threats, reprimands, and tender persuasives, to engage her to finish the affair of her marriage to their satisfaction. The young gentleman, her suitor, pressed her with the most endearing flatteries and caresses, her servants entreated her with tears, her friends and neighbours exhorted and conjured her, and the authority and threats of the civil magistrate were employed to bring her to the desired compliance.

The young nobleman to whom she was engaged still felt his heart warm with his passion for the saint and, instead of overcoming it, thought of nothing but how to gratify it, or to be revenged of her, from whom he pretended he had received a grievous affront. In these dispositions he closely pursued and at length overtook her, and as she still refused to marry him, he delivered her into the hands of the magistrates and urged such articles against her that she was condemned to be torn in pieces by wild beasts. Nevertheless her resolution was invincible. She was exposed naked in the amphitheatre, but clothed with her innocence; and this ignominy enhanced her glory and her crown. Her heart was undaunted, her holy soul exulted and triumphed with joy in the midst of lions, pards, and tigers; and she waited with a holy impatience the onset of those furious beasts, whose roarings filled even the spectators with terror. But the lions, on a sudden forgetting their natural ferocity and the rage of their hunger, walked gently up to the holy virgin, and laying themselves down at her feet, licked them as if it had been respectfully to kiss them; and at length, notwithstanding all the keepers could do to excite and provoke them, they meekly retired like lambs, without hurting the servant of Christ. This wonderful circumstance is related and set off with the genuine beauties of unaffected eloquence by St Ambrose,<sup>2</sup> St Chrysostom, St Methodius, St Gregory Nazianzen, and other fathers.

She was at another time, by the divine interposition, delivered from the power of fire, and preserved without hurt in the midst of the flames, as St Gregory Nazianzen,<sup>3</sup> St Methodius, and others testify; who add that she was rescued from many other dangers, to which the rage of persecutors

<sup>1</sup> Hom. 14, in Cant.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. ii. de Virg. p. 469, in Ps. civ. et Ep. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Carm. 4. et Or. 18.

exposed her. A very ancient Martyrology which bears the name of St Jerom, published by Florentinius, mentions that Rome was the place where God extinguished the flames to preserve the life of this holy virgin. She attended St Paul in several of his apostolical journeys, studying to form her own life upon that excellent model of Christian perfection. She is styled by St Gregory Nazianzen, St Chrysostom, St Austin, and others, a virgin and martyr. Her sufferings justly purchased her this latter title, though Bede in his Martyrology tells us that she died in peace; which is proved also from other authorities by Papebroke<sup>1</sup> and Tillemont.<sup>2</sup> The latter part of her life she spent in devout retirement in Isauria, here she died, and was buried at Seleucia, the metropolis of that country. Over her tomb in that city a sumptuous church was built under the first Christian emperors, which bore her name, was visited by SS. Marana and Cyra, two female anchorets mentioned by Theodoret, and crowds of pilgrims, and rendered famous by many miracles, as we learn both from Theodoret, St Gregory Nazianzen, Bazil of Seleucia, and others. The great cathedral at Milan is dedicated to God in honour of St Thecla, and has been long possessed of part of her precious remains.

If we desire to please Christ, we must imitate the saints in their love of purity, and in strict chastity according to the circumstances of our state. To obtain this great virtue, we must earnestly beg it of God, praying him to inspire us with his holy fear, to create in us an abhorrence of all sin and dangerous occasions, to cleanse our affections, and to teach us to set the strictest guard upon all our senses, especially upon our eyes, ears, and tongue. Secondly, we must study sincere humility of heart, and live in an entire distrust of ourselves and fear of dangers. To forget our weakness, or to presume upon our own resolution or strength, is equally foolish, fatal, and criminal. Thirdly, we must shun all occasions which many incite and fire our passions, especially all fond friendships and intimacies between young persons. Even such as are begun in the spirit, without the utmost precautions will degenerate into a carnal affection. Fourthly, we must be always employed, always eager in some serious exercises which must never leave us one moment idle. Devotions and labour or business must be alternately called in, so that the devil may always find our mind taken up. Fifthly, we must live in the habitual practice of frequently denying our inclinations and mortifying the senses. If we give our appetites full liberty in things that are not forbid, they will quickly master us, and crave gratifications that are unlawful, with too great violence to be restrained by us.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 23 :*

ST ADAMNAN of Ireland, Abbot ; he wrote the life of St Columkille and a curious book on the Holy Land as it was in his time : ST LINUS, Pope, the immediate successor of St Peter ; he is named among the martyrs : ST THECLA, whose name has ever been famous in the Church ; she is styled the protomartyr of her sex and one of the brightest ornaments of the apostolic age ; a learned virgin said to have been instructed by St Paul.

<sup>1</sup> Maij. t. i. p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> T. ii. n. 4, p. 489.

SEPTEMBER 24

## ST GERARD, BISHOP OF CHONAD, MARTYR

(A.D. 1046)

[From his exact life in Surius, Bonfinius, Hist. Hung. Dec. 2, lib. i., ii.; Fleury, t. ix.; Gowget Mezungui and Roussel, Vies des Saints, 1730; Stilling, t. vi. Sept. p. 713; Mabillon, Act. Ben. sæc. 6, par. 1, p. 628.]

ST GERARD, the apostle of a large district in Hungary, was a Venetian, and born about the beginning of the eleventh century. He renounced early the enjoyments of the world, forsaking family and estate to consecrate himself to the service of God in a monastery. By taking up the yoke of our Lord from his youth, he found it light, and bore it with constancy and joy. After some years, with the leave of his superiors, he undertook a pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem. Passing through Hungary, he became known to the holy king St Stephen, who was wonderfully taken with his sincere piety, and with great earnestness persuaded him that God had only inspired him with the design of that pilgrimage that he might assist, by his labours, the souls of so many in that country who were perishing in their infidelity. Gerard, however, would by no means consent to stay at court, but built a little hermitage at Beel, where he passed seven years with one companion, called Maur, in the constant practice of fasting and prayer. The king, having settled the peace of his kingdom, drew Gerard out of his solitude, and the saint preached the gospel with wonderful success. Not long after, the good prince nominated him to the episcopal see of Chonad, or Chzonad, a city eight leagues from Temeswar. Gerard considered nothing in this dignity but labours, crosses, and the hope of martyrdom. Two-thirds of the inhabitants of the city of Chonad were idolaters; yet the saint, in less than a year, made them all Christians. His labours were crowned with almost equal success in all the other parts of the diocese. The fatigues which he underwent were excessive, and the patience with which he bore all kinds of affront was invincible. He commonly travelled on foot, but sometimes in a waggon: he always read or meditated on the road. He regulated everywhere all things that belonged to the divine service with the utmost care.

The example of our saint had a more powerful influence over the minds of the people than the most moving discourses. He was humble, modest, mortified in all his senses, and seemed to have perfectly subdued all his passions. This victory he gained by a strict watchfulness over himself. Once, finding a sudden motion to anger rising in his breast, he immediately imposed upon himself a severe penance, asked pardon of the person who had injured him, and heaped upon him great favours. After spending the day in his apostolic labours, he employed part of the night in devotion and

sometimes in cutting down wood, and other such actions, for the service of the poor. All distressed persons he took under his particular care, and treated the sick with uncommon tenderness. He embraced lepers and persons afflicted with other loathsome diseases with the greatest joy and affection, often laid them in his own bed, and had their sores dressed in his own chamber. Such was his love of retirement that he caused several small hermitages or cells to be built near the towns in the different parts of his diocese, and in these he used to take up his lodgings wherever he came in his travels about his diocese, avoiding to lie in cities, that under the pretence of reposing himself in these solitary huts he might indulge the heavenly pleasures of prayer and holy contemplation, which gave him fresh vigour in the discharge of his pastoral functions.

The holy king St Stephen seconded the zeal of the good bishop as long as he lived. But that prince's nephew and successor, Peter, a debauched and cruel prince, declared himself the persecutor of our saint, but was expelled by his own subjects in 1042, and Abas, a nobleman of a savage disposition, was placed on the throne. St Stephen had established a custom that the crown should be presented to the king by some bishops on all great festivals. Abas gave notice to St Gerard to come to court to perform that ceremony. The saint, regarding the exclusion of Peter as irregular, refused to pay the usurper that compliment, and foretold him that if he persisted in his crime God would soon put an end both to his life and reign. Other prelates, however, gave him the crown; but two years after, the very persons who had placed him on the throne turned their arms against him, treated him as a rebel, and cut off his head on the scaffold. Peter was recalled; but two years after banished a second time. The crown was then offered to Andrew, son of Ladislas, cousin-german to St Stephen, upon condition that he should restore idolatry and extirpate the Christian religion. The ambitious prince made his army that promise. Hereupon Gerard and three other bishops set out for Alba Regalis in order to divert the new king from this sacrilegious engagement.

When the four bishops were arrived at Giod, near the Danube, St Gerard, after celebrating mass, said to his companions, "We shall all suffer martyrdom to-day, except the Bishop of Benetha." They were advanced a little further and going to cross the Danube when they were set upon by a party of soldiers under the command of Duke Vatha, the most obstinate patron of idolatry, and the implacable enemy of the memory of St Stephen. They attacked St Gerard first with a shower of stones and, exasperated at his meekness and patience, overturned his chariot and dragged him on the ground. Whilst in their hands, the saint raised himself on his knees and prayed, with the protomartyr St Stephen. "Lord, lay not this to their charge; for they know not what they do." He had scarce spoke these words when he was run through the body with a lance

and expired in a few minutes. Two of the other bishops, named Bezterd and Buld, shared the glory of martyrdom with him; but the new king coming up, rescued the fourth bishop out of the hands of the murderers. This prince afterwards repressed idolatry, was successful in his wars against the Germans that invaded his dominions, and reigned with glory. St Gerard's martyrdom happened on the 24th of September 1046. His body was first interred in a church of our Lady near the place where he suffered, but soon after removed to the cathedral of Chonad. He was declared a martyr by the pope, and his remains were taken up and put in a rich shrine in the reign of St Ladislas. At length the republic of Venice, by repeated importunate entreaties, obtained his relics of the King of Hungary, and with great solemnity translated them to their metropolis, where they are venerated in the church of our Lady of Murano.

The good pastor refuses no labour and declines no danger for the good of souls. If the soil where his lot falls be barren, and he plants and waters without increase, he never loses patience, but redoubles his earnestness in his prayers and labours. He is equally secure of his own reward if he perseveres to the end; and can say to God, as St Bernard remarks, "Thou, O Lord, wilt not less reward my pains if I shall be found faithful to the end." Zeal and tender charity give him fresh vigour, and draw floods of tears from his eyes for the souls which perish, and for their contempt of the infinite and gracious Lord of all things. Impatience and uneasiness in pastors never spring from zeal or charity, but from self-love, which seeks to please itself in the success of what it undertakes. The pastor must imitate the treasures of God's patience, goodness, and long-suffering. He must never abandon any sinner to whom God, the offended party, still offers mercy.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 24 :*

OUR LADY OF RANSOM, a feast commemorating the establishment of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the redemption of captives : ST CHUNIALD or CONALD of Ireland, one of the most eminent Scottish or Irish missionaries who carried the faith into Germany : ST GERARD, Bishop of Chonad, martyr : ST GERMER or GEREMAR, Abbot, who, whilst yet a layman, built a monastery in honour of St Peter, where his only son was afterwards buried : ST RUSTICUS, commonly called ST ROTIRI, lived as an anchorite for five years ; Bishop of Auvergne ; there were in his age two other bishops of this name, one of Lyons and the other of Narbonne : THE VENERABLE WILLIAM SPENCER AND THE VENERABLE ROBERT HARDESTY, English martyrs, 1589.

SEPTEMBER 25

ST CEOLFRID, ABBOT

(A.D. 716)

[From Bede, Hist. lib. v. et lib. de Vitis Abbat. Wirim. Item, lib. de Temporibus. See Leland de Scriptor; Bulteau, Hist. lib. iv. ; Pitseus, and Suysken, t. vii. Sept. p. 123.]

CEOLFRID is the same Teutonic name with Geoffroy, and signifies Joyful, as Camden remarks. The saint was nobly born in Bernicia, and related

to St Bennet Biscop, with whom he joined in the generous resolution of quitting the world. With him he made a journey to Rome, partly out of devotion and partly for improvement in sacred studies and divine knowledge. After their return he was St Bennet's assistant in the foundation of his monastery of St Peter at Wiremouth, on the north bank of the river, in the bishopric of Durham. St Ceolfrid would have regarded it as his greatest felicity on earth if he could have been as much forgotten by all creatures and contemned by everyone as he contemned and studied to forget himself: and he lived in his community, as St Antony and St Hilarion lived on their mountains, in the most profound recollection and in the practice of the most austere penance. When St Bennet built the monastery of St Paul at Jarrow, he sent Ceolfrid with seventeen monks to lay the foundation of that house, and appointed him abbot. Our saint governed this abbey seven years in St Bennet's lifetime, and was constituted, at the desire of that saint, in his last sickness, abbot also of Wiremouth: from which time he presided, for twenty-eight years, over both those monasteries, which for their propinquity and constant connection were usually esteemed as one, and were generally subject to one abbot. St Ceolfrid was diligent and active in everything he took in hand, of a sharp wit, mature in judgment, and fervent in zeal. Bede, who had the happiness to live under this admirable man, has left us most authentic testimonies of his learning, abilities, and extraordinary sanctity. He was a great lover of sacred literature, and enriched the libraries of his two monasteries with a great number of good books; but banished those which could only serve to entertain curiosity.

St Ceolfrid, finding himself broken with age and infirmities, and no longer capable of teaching his monks by word and example the perfect form of monastic observance, resigned his abbacy. The monks entreated him on their knees to alter his resolution, but were obliged to acquiesce; and upon his recommendation chose Hucthbert, or rather Hubert, a very learned priest, abbot of both monasteries, in which then lived six hundred monks. This being done, the saint, having sung mass in the morning, made them a strong exhortation to mutual love and concord; and for fear of being stopped by the grandees of the kingdom, who all held him in great veneration, set out immediately with a design to perform a pilgrimage to the tombs of the apostles at Rome. On the road, besides the canonical hours, he every day sung the whole psalter twice over, and also offered to God the saving victim in the mass which he sung every day, except one when he was upon the sea, and the three last days of his life. After travelling one hundred and fourteen days, he arrived at Langres, in France, where, being stopped by sickness, he happily died on the 25th of September, in the year of our Lord 716, of his age seventy-four, of his sacerdotal character forty-seven, and his abbatial dignity thirty-five. He was buried

in the church of the three twin martyrs, SS. Speusippus, Eleusippus, and Meleusippus. His relics were afterwards removed to his monastery of Jarrow and thence, in the time of the Danish devastations, to Glastonbury.<sup>1</sup> Leland saw a square stone at Jarrow on which was this inscription:<sup>2</sup> "The dedication of the Church of St Paul, at Jarrow, on the ninth day before the calends of May, in the fifteenth year of King Ecfrid, and the fourth of the abbot Ceolfrid, the builder of this church."

The example of all the saints show us that virtue is not to be attained without serious endeavours and much pains. The various exercises of piety, religion, and penance, and all the conditions upon which God has promised his graces to us, must be performed with fervour, constancy, and perseverance. The slothful and faint-hearted think everything above their strength, though they are never weary in labouring for this wretched world. If they set about the business of their salvation in good earnest, they will soon do with ease and pleasure that which their indolence made them to look upon as impossible: and they will quickly find that there is a most delicious hidden manna in true virtue. Its possession is to the soul a spring of uninterrupted pure joy, far beyond the vain delights of the world and the filthy pleasures of sin, even if these latter were not mixed with the bitter draughts which always attend them.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 25 :*

ST AUNAIRE, Bishop of Auxerre about 570 ; he framed forty-five statutes at his first synod—the first condemned superstitious observances on New Year's Day : ST BARR or FINBARR, Bishop of Cork, founded a monastery to which so many repaired as to change a desert into a large city : BLESSED CAMILLO CONSTANZO, of the Society of Jesus, 1570–1622, martyred in Japan by being burnt over a slow fire ; author of some apologetic works : ST CEOLFRID, Abbot, 716 ; this is the same Teutonic name as Geoffroy and means " Joyful " ; this saint was related to ST Bennet Biscop : and ST FIRMAN, Bishop of Amiens, consecrated Bishop by St Honoratus, to preach the gospel in the remote parts of Gaul.

## SEPTEMBER 26

### ST CYPRIAN AND ST JUSTINA, MARTYRS

(A.D. 304)

[The Empress Eudocia, wife of Theodosius the Younger, wrote the history of SS. Cyprian and Justina in a beautiful Greek poem, consisting of three books, commended by Photius, who has given an abstract of this work ; but the poem itself is lost. The authentic acts of these martyrs are likewise lost, but we have still extant the confession of St Cyprian, written by himself, the same that was made use of by St Gregory Nazianzen and Eudocia ; also two other genuine pieces, the one entitled, " The Conversion of Justina and Cyprian " ; the other, " An Account of their Martyrdom. "]

ST CYPRIAN, surnamed the Magician, was an illustrious instance of the divine grace and mercy. He was a native of Antioch (not the capital of Syria, but a small city of that name situated between Syria and Arabia), which the Romans allotted to the government of Phœnicia, to the jurisdiction of which province this martyr was subject. The detestable super-

<sup>1</sup> See App. ad Martyr. Gallic. Malmesb. de Reg. lib. i. c. 3, et Monast. Angl. lib. i. c. 4.  
<sup>2</sup> See Leland, de Scriptor. ed. a Tanner, p. 162.

stition of his idolatrous parents put them upon devoting him from his infancy to the devil, and he was brought up in all the impious mysteries of idolatry, judicial astrology, and black art. In hopes of making great discoveries in these infernal pretended sciences, he left his native country, when he was grown up, and travelled to Athens, Mount Olympus, in Macedon, Argos, Phrygia, Memphis, in Egypt, Chaldæa, and the Indies, places at that time famous for superstition and magical arts.

There lived at Antioch a young lady called Justina whose birth and beauty drew all eyes upon her. She was born of heathen parents, but was brought over to the Christian faith, and her conversion was followed by that of her father and mother. A pagan young nobleman fell deeply in love with her, and finding her modesty inaccessible, and her resolution invincible, he applied to Cyprian for the assistance of his art. Cyprian was no less smitten with the lady than his friend, and heartily tried every secret with which he was acquainted to conquer her resolution. Justina, perceiving herself vigorously attacked, studied to arm herself by prayer, watchfulness, and mortification against all his artifices and the power of his spells. "She defeated and put to flight the devils by the sign of the holy cross," says Photius, from Eudocia.<sup>1</sup> St Cyprian writes in his confession,<sup>2</sup> "She armed herself with the sign of Christ, and overcame the invocations of the demons." St Gregory Nazianzen adds, "Suppliantly beseeching the Virgin Mary that she would succour a virgin in danger, she fortified herself with the antidotes of fasting, tears, and prayers." Cyprian, finding himself worsted by a superior power, began to consider the weakness of the infernal spirits, and resolved to quit their service. The devil, enraged to lose one by whom he had made so many conquests of other souls, assailed Cyprian with the utmost fury and, having been repulsed in several other assaults, he at length overspread the soul of the penitent sinner with a gloomy melancholy, and brought him almost to the brink of despair at the sight of his past crimes. God inspired him in this perplexity to address himself to a holy priest named Eusebius, who had formerly been his schoolfellow: by the advice of this priest he was wonderfully comforted and encouraged in his conversion. Cyprian, who in the pressure of his heart had been three days without eating, by the counsel of this charitable director took some refreshment and, on the following Sunday, very early in the morning, was conducted by him to the assembly of the Christians; for though it was forbid for persons not initiated by baptism to assist at the celebration of the divine mysteries, this did not regard other devotions, to which such as were under instruction in the faith might be admitted. So much was Cyprian struck at the awful reverence and heavenly devotion with which this act of the divine worship was performed that he writes of it,<sup>3</sup> "I saw the choir of heavenly men, or of

<sup>1</sup> Cod. 184.<sup>2</sup> p. 310.<sup>3</sup> Cod. p. 329.



angels, singing to God, adding at the end of every verse in the psalms the Hebrew word Alleluia, so that they seemed not to be men." Everyone present was astonished to see Cyprian introduced by a priest among them, and the bishop was scarce able to believe his own eyes; or at least to be persuaded that his conversion was sincere. But Cyprian gave him a proof the next day by burning before his eyes all his magical books, giving his whole substance to the poor, and entering himself among the catechumens. After due instruction and preparation, he received the sacrament of regeneration from the hands of the bishop. St Gregory Nazianzen beautifully describes the astonishing change that was wrought in Cyprian, his edifying deportment, his humility, modesty, gravity, love of God, contempt of riches, and assiduous application to heavenly things. The same father tells us that, out of humility, with earnest entreaties, he prevailed to be employed as sweeper of the church. Eudocia, quoted by Photius, says he was made door-keeper; but that, after some time, he was promoted to the priesthood and, after the death of Anthimus the bishop, was placed in the episcopal chair of Antioch. Joseph Assemani thinks, not of Antioch, but of Damascus or some other city in Syria.

The persecution of Diocletian breaking out, Cyprian was apprehended and carried before the governor of Phœnicia, who resided at Tyre. Justina had retired to Damascus, her native country, which city at that time was subject to the same presidial; and, falling into the hands of the persecutors, was presented to the same judge. She was inhumanly scourged, and Cyprian was torn with iron hooks, probably at Damascus. After this they were both sent in chains to Diocletian, residing at Nicomedia, who, upon reading the letter of the governor of Phœnicia, without more ado commanded their heads to be struck off: which sentence was executed upon the banks of the river Gallus, which passes not far from the city of Nicomedia. Theoctistus, also a Christian, was beheaded with them for speaking to Cyprian as he was going to execution. Their relics were procured by certain Christians who came from Rome, and were carried by them thither on board their vessel. In the reign of Constantine the Great, a pious lady named Rufina, of the family of Claudius, built a church in their memory near the square which bears the name of that prince. These relics were afterwards removed into the Lateran basilic.

If the errors and disorders of St Cyprian show the degeneracy of human nature, corrupted by sin and enslaved to vice, his conversion displays the power of grace and virtue to repair it. How strangely the image of God is disfigured in man by sin appears by the disorders of his spiritual faculties, the understanding and will, in which the divine resemblance was stamped in the creation. Not only beasts and other creatures have revolted from his dominion, and the shattered frame of his body is made a prey to

diseases and death, but his will is rebellious, and the passions strive to usurp the empire and destroy in his soul the government of reason and virtue. Also the understanding, that should be the eye to the blind will, is itself blind, and the light within us is become darkness. In the state of innocence it was clear, serene, and free from the vapours of the passions; it directed the verdict of the imagination and the senses, and gave to the soul, by intuition and without study, a full view into all speculative natural truths suited to man's condition; but its most valuable privilege was, that it taught man all the practical rules and notions of moral virtue firm and untainted, so that he carried this law in his bosom, and had but to look into his own conscience for the direction of his actions in the practice of all moral virtue, which by the strong assistance of grace was always easy to him. His understanding was also enlightened by a perfect divine revelation, and his will found no obstacle in the exercises of all theological and other supernatural virtues. The most fatal consequence and punishment of his disobedience we deplore in the extravagances, folly, crimes, and errors into which men are betrayed when they become once enslaved to their passions. Religion and faith alone secure us from these dangers, enlighten our understanding, and offer us the means to restore the rectitude of the will.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 26 :*

ST COLMAN ELO, Abbot, born in Meath; built there the great monastery of Land-elo, in which he trained many to religious perfection: ST CYPRIAN, surnamed the Magician, devoted by his parents to the worship of the devil; he found Christian women proof against his spells: ST JUSTINA, who suffered martyrdom with him: ST EUSEBIUS, Pope, who succeeded St Marcellus and strenuously maintained the discipline of the Church; he is said to have sat in the chair of Peter for only four months and sixteen days: ST NILUS THE YOUNGER, Abbot, of Grecian extraction, who, after the death of his wife, betook himself to a monastery; he died, aged ninety-six, in 1005.

## SEPTEMBER 27

### ST COSMAS AND ST DAMIAN, MARTYRS

(ABOUT THE YEAR 303)

[See Ado's Martyrol., with the comments of Monsignor Georgi, Bede, Usuard, St Gregory the Great, and St Gregory of Tours. Their acts are so disfigured by modern Greeks as to be of no account. See also Stilling, t. vii. Sept. p. 431.]

SAINTS COSMAS and DAMIAN were brothers and born in Arabia, but studied the sciences in Syria and became eminent for their skill in physic. Being Christians, and full of that holy temper of charity in which the spirit of our divine religion consists, they practised their profession with great application and wonderful success; but never took any gratification or fee. They lived at Ægæ or Egæa, in Cilicia, and were remarkable both for the love and respect which the people bore them on account of the good offices which they received from their charity, and for their zeal for the Christian faith, which they took every opportunity their profession gave them to propagate. When the persecution of Diocletian began to rage,

it was impossible for persons of so distinguished a character to lie concealed. They were therefore apprehended by the order of Lysias, governor of Cilicia, and after various torments were beheaded for the faith. Their bodies were carried into Syria and buried at Cyrus. Theodoret, who was bishop of that city in the fifth century, mentions that their relics were then deposited in a church there, which bore their names.<sup>1</sup> He calls them two illustrious champions, and valiant combatants for the faith of Jesus Christ. The Emperor Justinian, who began his reign in 527, out of a religious regard for the treasure of these precious relics, enlarged, embellished, and strongly fortified this city of Cyrus; and finding a ruinous church at Constantinople, built in honour of these martyrs, as is said, in the reign of Theodosius the Younger (who died in the middle of the fifth age), raised a stately edifice in its room, as a monument of his gratitude for the recovery of his health in a dangerous fit of sickness, through their intercession, as Procopius relates.<sup>2</sup> To express his particular devotion to these saints, he built also another church under their names at Constantinople. Marcellinus, in his chronicle,<sup>3</sup> and St Gregory of Tours,<sup>4</sup> relate several miracles performed by their intercession. Their relics were conveyed to Rome, where the holy Pope St Felix, great-grandfather to St Gregory the Great, built a church to their honour, in which these relics are kept with veneration to this day.

These saints regarded it as a great happiness that their profession offered them perpetual opportunities of affording comfort and relief to the most distressed part of their fellow creatures. Men engaged in professions instituted for the service of their neighbour may sanctify their labour or industry, if actuated by the motive of charity towards others, even whilst they also have in view the justice which they owe to themselves and their family of procuring an honest and necessary subsistence, which is itself often a strict obligation and no less noble a virtue, if it be founded in motives equally pure and perfect.

### ST ELZEAR, COUNT OF ARIAN, AND ST DELPHINA

ST ELZEAR was descended of the ancient and illustrious family of Sabran in Provence; his father, Hermengaud of Sabran, was created Count of Arian in the kingdom of Naples; his mother was Lauduna of Albes, a family no less distinguished for its nobility. The saint was born in 1295 at Ansois, a castle belonging to his father in the diocese of Apt. Immediately after his birth, his mother, whose great piety and charity to the poor had procured her the name of The Good Countess, taking him in her arms, offered

<sup>1</sup> Theodoret, Ep. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Ad an. 516.

<sup>3</sup> Procop. de *Ædific.* Justinian, lib. ii. c. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. de Glor. Mart.

him to God with great fervour, begging that he might never offend his divine majesty, but might rather die in his infancy than live ever to be guilty of so dreadful an evil. The child seemed formed from his cradle to piety and virtue; nor could he by any means be satisfied if he saw any poor beggar till he was relieved; for which reason his nurses and governess were obliged to have their pockets always furnished with bread and small money, in order to give something to every poor person they met when they took him abroad; and it was his delight to divide his dinner with poor children. The first impressions of virtue he received from his mother, but these were perfected by his religious uncle, William of Sabran, abbot of St Victor's, at Marseilles, under whom he had his education in that monastery. In his tender age he wore a rough knotty cord, armed with sharp pricks, which galled his flesh so that it was discovered by blood issuing from the wounds. The abbot severely chid him for this and some other extraordinary austerities which he practised, calling him a self-murderer; yet secretly admired so great fervour in a tender young lord.

The saint was only ten years old when Charles II, King of Sicily and Count of Provence, caused him to be affianced to Delphina of Glandeves, daughter to the Lord of Pui-Michel, she being no more than twelve years of age. Three years after, in 1308, the marriage was solemnized at the castle of Pui-Michel; but, at the suggestion of the young lady, they both secretly agreed to live together as brother and sister. The austerity with which they kept Lent revived the example of the saints of the primitive ages; and they fasted, almost in the same manner, Advent and many other days in the year. They lived seven years at Ansois, after which they removed to the castle of Pui-Michel. Elzear had, till that time, lived with his parents in the most dutiful and respectful subjection to them. He left them, with their consent, only for the sake of greater solitude, and that he might be more at liberty to pursue his exercises of devotion and piety. The saint was twenty-three years old when, by their deaths, he inherited his father's honours and estates; but these advantages he looked merely upon as talents and instruments put into his hands to be employed for the advancement of piety, the support of justice, and the relief and protection of the poor. By fervent and assiduous prayer, and meditation on heavenly things, he fortified his soul against the poison of all inordinate love of creatures; he perfectly understood the falsehood and illusion of all those things which flatter and dazzle the senses, and he had a sovereign contempt and distaste for all that can only serve to feed self-love. Eternal goods were the sole object of his desires. He recited every day the office of the church, with many other devotions, and he communicated almost every day, striving to do it every time with greater devotion. He said one day to Delphina, "I do not think a man on earth can enjoy any pleasure equal to that which I feel in the holy communion. It is the greatest delight and

comfort of a soul in her earthly pilgrimage to receive most frequently this divine sacrament." In prayer he was often favoured with raptures and heavenly graces. By the constant habitual union of his soul with God he never found any difficulty in keeping it recollected in all places and at all times. He often watched great part of the nights on his knees in prayer. His devotion was not morose, because it was true and perfect.

When he first began to keep house at Pui-Michel, he made the following regulations for his family, which he took care to see always observed: "1. Everyone in my family shall daily hear mass, whatever business they may have. 2. Let no one swear, curse, or blaspheme, under pain of being severely chastised, and afterwards shamefully dismissed. Can I endure stinking mouths which infect houses, and poison the souls of others? 3. Let all persons honour chastity, and let no one imagine that the least impurity in word or action shall ever go unpunished in Elzear's house. It is never to be hoped for of me. 4. Let all men and women confess their sins every week; and let no one be so unhappy as not to communicate at least on all the principal festivals: namely, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and the feasts of our Lady. 5. Let no persons be idle in my house. In the morning, the first thing shall be that everyone raise his heart to God with fervent prayer and oblation of himself and of all his actions; then let all go to their business, the men abroad, the women at home. In the morning a little more time shall be allowed for meditation; but away with those who are perpetually in the church to avoid the business of their employments. This they do, not because they love contemplation, but because they desire to have their work done for them. The life of the pious woman, as described by the Holy Ghost, is not only to pray well, but also to be modest and obedient, to ply her work diligently, and to take good care of the household. The ladies shall pray and read in the mornings, but shall spend the afternoons at some work. 6. I will have no playing at dice or any games of hazard. There are a thousand innocent diversions, though time passes soon enough without being idly thrown away. Yet I desire not my castle to be a cloister, nor my people hermits. Let them be merry, and sometimes divert themselves; but never at the expense of conscience, or with danger of offending God. 7. Let peace be perpetually maintained in my family. Where peace reigns, there God dwells. Where envy, jealousy, suspicions, reports, and slanders are harboured in one family, two armies are formed which are continually upon the watch and in ambush to surprise one another, and the master is besieged, wounded, and devoured by them both. Whoever will well serve God, he shall be dear to me; but I will never endure him who declares himself an enemy of God. Slanderers, detractors, and disorderly servants tear one another to pieces. All such as do not fear God cannot be trusted by their master, but they will easily make a prey of his goods. Amidst such, he is in his house as in a trench,

besieged on every side by enemies. 8. If any difference or quarrel happen, I will have the precept of the apostle inviolably observed, that the sun set not before it be appeased; but, in the instant that it falls out, let it be quashed, and all manner of bitterness laid in the tomb of forgetfulness. I know the impossibility of living among men and not having something to suffer. Scarce is a man in tune with himself one whole day; and if a melancholy humour comes on him, he knows not well what he himself would have. To love enemies, and to render good for evil, is the true touchstone of the sons of God. To such servants my house, my purse, and heart shall be always open: I am willing to regard them as my masters. 9. Every evening all my family shall assemble to a pious conference, in which they shall hear something spoken of God, the salvation of souls, and the gaining of paradise. Discourses on heaven invite us to virtue and inspire us with a disrelish of the dangerous pleasures of the world. By what means shall we learn to love God if we never speak of him? Let none be absent from this conference upon pretence of attending my affairs. I have no business which so nearly toucheth my heart as the salvation of those that serve me. They have given themselves to me, and I resign all to God, master, servants, and all that is in my power. 10. I most strictly command that no officer or servant under my jurisdiction or authority injure any man in goods, honour, or reputation, or oppress any poor person, or ruin anyone under colour of doing my business. I will not have my coffers filled by emptying those of others, or by squeezing the blood out of the veins and the marrow out of the bones of the poor. Such blood-sucking wicked servants, to enrich their masters, damn both masters and themselves. Do you imagine that a master who giveth five shillings in alms wipeth away the theft of his servants, who have torn out the entrails of the poor, whose cries for vengeance mount up to heaven? I had rather go naked to paradise than, being clothed with gold and scarlet, be dragged with the impious rich man into hell. We shall be wealthy enough if we fear God. Let fourfold be restored if I be found to have anything which is another's; and let my dealings be public, that all who have been aggrieved on my account may find redress."

St Elzear set himself the first example in every point which he prescribed to others. He was particularly careful that if anyone let fall the least injurious or angry word against another, he should ask pardon and make satisfaction, this humiliation being the most easy and effectual remedy of a passion which always takes its rise from pride. Delphina concurred with her husband in all his views, and was perfectly obedient to him. No coldness, for so much as one moment, ever interrupted the harmony or damped the affections of this holy couple. The pious countess was very sensible that the devotions of a married woman ought to be ordered in a different manner from those of a religious person; that contemplation

is the sister of action; and that Martha and Mary must mutually help one another. Her time was so regulated that she had certain hours allotted for spiritual exercises, and others for her household affairs and other duties. The care with which she looked into the economy of her house was a sensible proof of the interior order in which she kept her own soul. Nothing was more admirable than her attention to all her domestics, and her prudent application that peace should be observed, the fear of God and all virtues well entertained, and all brawling, tale-bearing, and other plagues of families banished. She loved her servants as her children, and she was honoured by them as a mother and as a saint. In this example it appeared how truly it is said that good and virtuous masters make good servants, and that the families of saints are God's families. Alasia, sister to Delphina, lived with her, and was her faithful companion in all her pious exercises. It seemed that all that came under the roof of Elzear contracted a spirit of sincere piety: so great is the influence of good examples set by masters and mistresses.

The gate through which the rich must enter heaven is mercy and charity to the poor. St Elzear often visited the hospitals, especially those of lepers, whose loathsome sores he frequently kissed, cleansed, and dressed with his own hands. He every day washed the feet of twelve poor men, and often served them himself, performing the office of a carver and cup-bearer. He was the common father of all that were in distress, and provided large granaries of corn and storehouses of all other provisions for their relief. He used to say, "How can we ask God to bestow on us his kingdom if we deny him a cup of water; how can we pray for his grace if we deny him what is his own? Does not he too much honour us in vouchsafing to accept anything from us?" In a time of scarcity, in 1310, his alms seemed to surpass all bounds. After his father's death he was obliged to go into the kingdom of Naples, to take possession of the county of Arian; but the people, being inclined to favour the house of Arragon against the French, and despising the meekness of the young prince, revolted, and refused to acknowledge him. Elzear opposed to their rebellion for three years no other arms than those of meekness and patience, which his friends reproachfully called indolence and cowardice. His cousin, the Prince of Tarento, one day told him that his conduct hurt the common cause of his country, and said, "Allow me to take these rebels to task for you. I will hang up half a thousand, and make the rest as pliant as a glove. It is fit, among the good, to be a lamb, but with the wicked to play the lion. Such insolence must be curbed. Take your ease; say your prayers for me; and I will give so many blows for you that this rabble shall give you no more trouble." Elzear, smiling, replied, "What! would you have me begin my government with massacres and blood? I will overcome these men by good offices. It is no great matter for a lion to tear lambs; but for a lamb

to pull a lion in pieces is admirable. Now, by God's assistance, you will shortly see this miracle." The prince could not relish such language; but the effect verified the prediction.

In his country of Arian he settled a rigorous administration of justice, and punished without mercy the least oppression in any of his officers. He visited malefactors that were condemned to die, and many who had persisted deaf to priests were moved by his tender exhortations to sincere compunction, and to accept their punishment in a spirit of penance. When their goods were confiscated to him, he secretly restored them to their wives and children. Writing out of Italy to St Delphina, he said, "You desire to hear often of me. Go often to visit our amiable Lord Jesus Christ in the holy sacrament. Enter in spirit his sacred heart. You know that to be my constant dwelling. You will always find me there."

Elzear having settled his affairs in Italy, obtained leave of King Robert, the son and successor of Charles II, and brother of St Lewis, bishop of Toulouse, to return into Provence for two years. He was received at Ansois with incredible joy. Not long after, Elzear being in the twenty-fifth year of his age, and Delphina, after receiving the communion, pronounced publicly, at the foot of the altar, in the chapel of the castle, mutual vows of perpetual chastity, which Elzear had till then kept unviolated without a vow, though Delphina had before made a secret vow. The count had remained two years in Provence when King Robert recalled him into Italy and conferred on him the honour of knighthood, of which he had approved himself worthy by many actions of uncommon valour and address and notable feats of arms. The saint had, according to custom, spent the night before this ceremony in the church in watching and prayer; he went to confession and communicated in the morning. The king on this occasion shed tears of joy at the sight of his extraordinary devotion and piety; and the whole court admired a prince who was at once a great soldier, a courtier, a married man, a virgin, and a saint.

King Robert chose him among all the lords of his dominions to be governor to his son Charles, Duke of Calabria. The young prince was sprightly, but understood too well his high extraction, was untractable, and had contracted the contagious air of the court. The count took notice of his pupil's dangerous inclinations, but dissembled this for some time till he had won his affections, and gained sufficient credit with him. When he saw it a fit time, he made him tender remonstrances on his defects, on the necessity of a sublime virtue to support the dignity of his high rank, and on the life to come. The young prince was so penetrated with his discourses that, leaping about his neck, he said, "It is not yet too late to begin: what then must I do?" Elzear explained to him the virtues of piety, magnanimity, justice, and clemency, showing that a prince who fears God has always a sure comfort and protection in heaven, though earth



should fail him, and that he who undertakes any business without first consulting God deserves always to be unhappy and ruined; and is always impious. Elzear, by his diligence and instructions, corrected the vices of his pupil, who became a grave and virtuous prince. King Robert, going into Provence, left his son Regent of Naples, under the tuition of Elzear, who was the chief of the council, and dispatched almost all the affairs of state. Whilst the chief authority was lodged in his hands, many offered him rich presents, which he refused, saying to those that called him on that account churlish, "It is more safe and easy to refuse all presents than to discern which might be received without danger. Neither is it easy for one who begins to take any, afterwards to know where to stop, for these things are apt to create an appetite." The law of nature itself condemns as bribes all presents received by judges; they giving insensibly a bias and inclination to favour the party, as is evident by general experience. St Elzear was so sincere a lover of truth that he was ready to die for it in the smallest points.

The Emperor Henry VII invaded Naples with a great army, nor was Pope Clement V able to divert him from his expedition. King Robert sent against him his brother John and Count Elzear, with as great an army as he was able to raise. Two pitched battles were fought, in both which Henry was defeated, chiefly by the valour and conduct of Elzear, so that the emperor desired a peace, which was readily concluded. King Robert gave Elzear many great presents, which he accepted with one hand, not to disoblige the king, but with the other distributed them all among the poor. This king sent Elzear ambassador to Paris, attended with the flower of the nobility of Naples, to demand of Charles IV, Mary, the daughter of the Count of Valois, in marriage for the Duke of Calabria. The negotiation was carried on with great success and the marriage concluded, and the good count was received at court not only with the greatest honour but also with veneration, and as a living saint. In the meantime, the holy ambassador fell sick at Paris. He had made his will in 1317, at Toulon, by which he left his moveable goods to his wife, Delphina, his real estates to his brother, William of Sabran, and legacies to his relations and servants, and especially to many convents and hospitals. When the saint, three years before, made his public vow of chastity, he on the same day enrolled himself in the Order of St Francis, into which seculars or laymen are admitted upon condition of their wearing a part of the Franciscan habit under their clothes, and saying certain prayers every day. St Elzear, in his sickness, made a general confession, with great compunction and many tears, to the provincial of the Franciscans, and he continued to confess almost every day of his illness, though he is said never to have offended God by any mortal sin. The history of Christ's passion, which mystery had always been the favourite object of his devotion, was every day read

to him, and in it he found exceeding great comfort amidst his pains. Receiving the holy viaticum, he said with great joy, "This is my hope; in this I desire to die." After extreme unction, and a painful agony, he happily expired on the 27th of September, in the year 1323, the twenty-eighth of his age. His death was exceedingly lamented by the kings of France and Naples, and by their whole courts. His body, according to his orders, was carried to Apt, and there interred in the church of the Franciscan friars in that town, where it is still kept. Juridical informations were taken of his miracles by order of Pope Clement VI. Urban V signed the decree of his canonization, but it was only published by Gregory XI in 1369, forty-six years after the saint's death, Delphina being still living. The king and queen of Naples would by no means suffer her to leave their court, to which she was a perfect model of piety. King Robert dying in 1343, the queen, whose name was Sancia and who was daughter to the King of Majorca, wearied with the empty greatness of the world and loathing its vanity, put on the habit of a Poor Clare in a nunnery which she had founded at Naples. In this state she lived ten years with great fervour, and would still have her dear Delphina near her, learning from her all the exercises of a spiritual life. After her death, Delphina returned into Provence and led the life of a recluse in the castle of Ansois, in the heroic practice of penance, charity, assiduous prayer and all other virtues. She died at Apt, near that castle, in the year 1369, the seventy-sixth of her age, on the 26th of September, on which she is named in the Martyrology of the Franciscan Order. Her mortal remains were deposited in the same tomb with those of St Elzear. See the life of St Elzear, published by Surius: also *Vite delli Santi del Terz. Ordine di S. Francesco*, c. 14, 15, 16, p. 30. Suysken, t. vii. Sept. p. 528.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 27 :*

ST COSMAS and ST DAMIAN, martyrs, about 303, two brothers born in Arabia; they studied in Syria, but took no fees: ST ELZEAR and ST DELPHINA, his wife, a noble couple; he was Count of Arian, offered to God in infancy by his mother, "the good Countess"; he is said never to have committed a mortal sin.

## SEPTEMBER 28

### ST WENCESLAS, DUKE OF BOHEMIA, MARTYR

(A.D. 938)

[From his life wrote by John Dubraw, Bishop of Olmutz, in Moravia, in the reign of Charles V. See also Æneas Sylvius, *Hist. Bohem.* lib. ii. c. 14, 15, and other historians of that country: with the remarks of Suysken, t. vii. Sept. p. 770; Balbinus, &c.]

ST WENCESLAS was son of Uratislas, Duke of Bohemia, and of Drahomira of Lucsko, and grandson of Borivor, the first Christian duke, and the blessed Ludmilla. His father was a valiant and good prince; but his mother was a pagan, and her heart was not less depraved as to sentiments of morality than as to those of religion. This princess was not less cruel

than haughty, nor less perfidious than impious. She had two sons, Wenceslas and Boleslas. Ludmilla, who lived at Prague ever since the death of her husband, obtained, as the greatest of favours, that the education of the elder might be entrusted to her, and she undertook, with the utmost care and application, to form his heart to devotion and the love of God. In this task she was assisted by Paul, her chaplain, a man of great sanctity and prudence, who likewise cultivated the young prince's mind with the first rudiments of learning. The pious pupil perfectly corresponded with their endeavours, and with the divine grace which rendered him a saint from the cradle. At a convenient age he was sent to a college at Budweis, above sixty miles from Prague where, under the direction of an excellent master, he made great progress in the sciences and other exercises suitable to his rank, and much more in all the virtues which compose the character of a Christian and a saint.

He was yet young when, his father dying, his mother Drahomira assumed the title of regent and seized on the government. Being no longer held in by any restraint, she gave a free loose to her rage against the Christians (which she had concealed whilst her husband lived), and published a severe order for shutting up all churches, prohibiting the exercise of our holy religion, and forbidding priests and all others who professed it to teach or instruct children. She repealed all the laws and regulations which Borivor and Uladislav had made in favour of the Christians; removed the Christian magistrates in all the towns in Bohemia, put heathens in their places; and employed only such officers as were blindly devoted to follow the dictates of her passions and tyranny; and these she incited everywhere to oppress the Christians, of whom great numbers were massacred. Ludmilla, sensibly afflicted at these public disorders, and full of concern for the interest of religion, which she and her consort had established with so much difficulty, by strong remonstrances showed Wenceslas the necessity of his taking the reins of the government into his own hands, promising to assist him with her directions and best advice. The young duke obeyed, and the Bohemians testified their approbation of his conduct; but, to prevent all disputes between him and his younger brother, they divided the country between them, assigning to the latter a considerable territory, which retains from him the name of Boleslavia, and is one of the chief circles of Bohemia.

Drahomira, enraged at these steps, secured herself an interest in Boleslas, her younger son, whose heart she had so far perverted as to taint him with the most execrable idolatry, hatred of the Christian religion, boundless ambition, and implacable cruelty. Wenceslas, on the other hand, directed all his views to the establishment of peace, justice, and religion in his dominions, and, by the advice of Ludmilla, chose able and zealous Christian ministers. After spending the whole day in acts of piety, and

application to the affairs of state and of his court, he employed a great part of the night in prayer. Such was his devout veneration for the holy sacrament of the altar that he thought it a great happiness to sow the corn, gather the grapes, and make the wine with his own hands, which were to be made use of at mass. Amidst the distractions of government, he found rest for his soul in God, its centre. The good prince stood in need of this comfort and support amidst the storms with which he was assailed. Drahomira never ceased to conjure up all the furies of hell against him. Looking upon Ludmilla as the first mover of all counsels in favour of the Christian religion, she laid a plot to take away her life. Ludmilla was informed of it and, without being disturbed, prepared herself for death. With this view she distributed her goods and money among her servants and the poor, confirmed the duke in his good resolutions for maintaining religion, made her confession to her chaplain Paul, and received the holy viaticum. The assassins found her prostrate in prayer before the altar in her domestic chapel and, seizing on her, strangled her with her own veil. She is honoured in Bohemia as a martyr on the 16th of September.

This complicated crime was very sensible to St Wenceslas; a circumstance which exceedingly aggravated his grief was that so execrable an action should have been perpetrated by the direction of his mother.

The Emperor Otho I, having assembled a general diet at Worms, St Wenceslas arrived at it late in the day, having been stopped by hearing a high mass on the road. Some of the princes took offence hereat; but the emperor, who had the highest opinion of his sanctity, received him with great honour, would have him sit next his person, and bade him ask whatever he pleased and it should be granted him. The saint asked an arm of the body of St Vitus, and a part of the relics of St Sigismund, King of Burgundy. The emperor readily granted his request; adding, that he conferred on him the regal dignity and title, and granted him the privilege of bearing the imperial eagle on his standard, with an exemption from paying any imperial taxes throughout all his dominions. The good duke thanked his majesty, but excused himself from taking the title of king, which, however, the emperor and princes of the empire from that time always gave him in letters and on all other occasions. When he had received the above-mentioned relics, he built a church in Prague in which he deposited them; and caused the body of St Ludmilla, three years after her death, to be translated into the Church of St George, which had been built by his father in that city. The severity with which the saint checked oppressions and certain other disorders in the nobility made some throw themselves into the faction of his unnatural mother, who concerted measures with her other son Boleslas to take him off at any rate. St Wenceslas had made a vow of virginity; but restless ambition is impatient of delays. A son being born to Boleslas, that prince and his mother invited the good

duke to favour them with his company at the rejoicings on that occasion. St Wenceslas went without the least suspicion of treachery, and was received with all imaginable marks of kindness and civility. This they did the better to cover their hellish design. The entertainment was splendid; but nothing could make the saint neglect his usual devotions. At midnight he went to offer his customary prayers in the church. Boleslas, at the instigation of Drahomira, followed him thither and, when his attendants had wounded him, he dispatched him with his own hand, running him through the body with a lance. The martyrdom of the holy duke happened on the 28th of September, in 938. The Emperor Otho marched with an army into Bohemia to revenge his death; the war continued several years; and, when he had vanquished the Bohemians, he contented himself with the submission of Boleslas, who engaged to recall the banished priests, to restore the Christian religion, and to pay him an annual tribute. Drahomira perished miserably soon after the perpetration of her horrible crime. Boleslas, terrified at the reputation of many miracles wrought at the martyr's tomb, caused his body to be translated to the Church of St Vitus, at Prague, three years after his death. His son and successor, Boleslas II, surnamed the Pious, was a faithful imitator of his uncle, St Wenceslas, and became one of the greatest princes of his time. A church was erected in honour of St Wenceslas in Denmark in 951, and his name was in great veneration all over the north.

The safety and happiness of government, and of all society among men, is founded upon religion. The general laws of nations and those of particular states are too weak restraints upon those who, in spite of nature itself, laugh the law of God out of doors. Unless religion bind a man in his conscience, he will become so far the slave of his passions as to be ready, with this unnatural mother and brother, to commit every advantageous villainy to which he is prompted, whenever he can do it with secrecy or impunity. It is safer to live among lions and tigers than among such men. It is not consistent with the goodness and justice of God to have created men without an interior law, and a law enforced by the strongest motives and the highest authority. Nor can his goodness and justice suffer obedience to his law to go unrewarded, or disobedience and contempt to remain unpunished. This consideration alone leads us to the confession of that just providence which reserves in the life to come the recompense of virtue and chastisement of vice which faith reveals to us; this is the sacred band of justice and civil society in the present life. True religion insures to him who sincerely professes it, comfort, support, and patience amidst the sharpest trials, security in death itself, and the most happy and glorious issue when God shall manifest himself the protector and rewarder of his servants. Virtue, here persecuted and oppressed, will shine forth

with the brighter lustre at the last day, as the sun breaking out from under a cloud displays its beam with greater brightness.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 28 :*

ST EUSTOCHIUM, virgin, whose memory is made illustrious by the pen of St Jerome; she was the daughter of the matron, Paula : ST EXUPERIUS, Bishop of Toulouse, praised by St Jerome for his goodness to the poor : ST LIOBA, an Englishwoman born in Dorset and trained in the monastery of Winburn; a model of Christian perfection in her own country and in Germany, where she laboured under her kinsman, St Boniface; and ST WENCESLAS, Duke of Bohemia; taught the habits of virtue by his devout grandmother, Ludmilla, he was treacherously murdered by his brother.

## SEPTEMBER 29

### THE DEDICATION OF ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH; OR, THE FESTIVAL OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL THE HOLY ANGELS

THIS festival has been kept with great solemnity on the 29th September ever since the fifth age, and was certainly celebrated in Apulia in 493. The dedication of the famous church of St Michael, on Mount Gargano, in Italy, gave occasion to the institution of this feast in the West, which is hence called in the Martyrologies of St Jerom, Bede, and others, the dedication of St Michael.

Though only St Michael be mentioned in the title of this festival, it appears from the prayers of the church that all the good angels are its object, together with this glorious prince and tutelar angel of the church. On it we are called upon, in a particular manner, to give thanks to God for the glory which the angels enjoy, and to rejoice in their happiness. Secondly, to thank him for his mercy to us in constituting such glorious beings to minister to our salvation, by aiding and assisting us. Thirdly, to join them in adoring and praising God with all possible ardour, desiring and praying that we may do his will on earth with the utmost fidelity, fervour, and purity of affection, as it is done by these blessed spirits in heaven; and that we may study to sanctify our souls in imitation of the spotless angels to whom we are associated. Lastly, we are invited to honour and implore the intercession and succour of the holy angels.

Supreme honour, called *Latria*, is essentially reserved to God alone; nor can it ever be given to any creature without incurring the most heinous guilt of idolatry, and high treason against the majesty of God. But there is an inferior or subaltern honour which is due to superior excellency in creatures. Such is that civil honour which the law of God expressly commands us to pay to parents, princes, magistrates, and all superiors: also some degree of a religious honour which the scriptures and law of nature teach us to be due to priests or the ministers of God, and which even the most wicked of kings often paid to prophets who, as to the world, were mean and obscure persons. This inferior honour differs from divine or

supreme honour as much as infinity in the object does from what is finite; nor can it be any way derogatory from that which is due to God, whom it honours in his creatures, whose perfections it acknowledges merely to be its gifts. The respect which is shown to a governor or an ambassador is not injurious, but is highly agreeable and honourable to his master, on whose account it is paid, and whose dignity and authority are considered in those whom he has made in any part the depositaries of it. This duty, which the law of nature dictates, is inculcated by those words of the apostle, "Render to all men their due. Honour to whom honour." Hence St Bernard expresses no more than what all men must necessarily approve when he says, "Give to everyone honour according to his dignity." Honour being no more than a testimony which we bear to another's excellency, who can deny this to be due to the most sublime, most perfect, most holy, and most glorious heavenly spirits? Abraham prostrated himself before the angels whom he received in his tent.<sup>1</sup> Daniel did the same before one whom he saw upon the Tigris.<sup>2</sup> God commanded the Israelites to fear and respect the angel whom he sent to be their conductor into the promised land.<sup>3</sup> The first consideration for which the holy angels claim our respect is that of the excellency of their nature, in which they are essentially of an order superior to men, being pure spirits, exempt from the weaknesses of our frail earthly frame, and endued with more noble faculties and qualities, suited to the perfection and simplicity of their unbodied and uncompounded being. Secondly, the gifts of grace and glory are proportioned in them to the superiority of their nature; and the scriptures speak of angels as absolutely above men, though some particular saints may, for aught we know, enjoy a greater felicity than many angels; and the Blessed Virgin is exalted in glory above all the heavenly spirits. Nor can any order of the highest spirits boast of an honour or dignity equal to that which is conferred on mankind by the mystery of the incarnation, in which the Son of God, who took not the nature of angels, assumed that of men,<sup>4</sup> and, as man, is constituted by his Father lord of all creatures. Had the blessed angels no other title to command our veneration, this alone suffices that they enjoy a state of bliss and glory, are the high courtiers of heaven who stand always in the presence of God, are his officers who surround his throne, and his faithful ministers in executing in all things his holy will.

A circumstance in the blessed angels which above all others is most amiable and pleasing to devout souls, and must particularly excite their praise and reverence, is the constant and perfect fidelity of these holy spirits to God. Their innocence and sanctity were never tarnished with the least spot or stain, the purity of their affections was never debased by the least mixture of anything inordinate, and the ardour with which they love God,

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xviii. 2.<sup>2</sup> Dan. x. 5, 9.<sup>3</sup> Exod. xxiii. 21.<sup>4</sup> Heb. ii. 16.

and exert all their powers to serve him and do his holy will, never admits the least abatement. If we love God, and rejoice when he is served and praised; if we grieve to see him forgotten and offended by men on earth; if we have the least spark of zeal for his glory, nothing will give us greater joy than to consider with what perfect fidelity he is served, and with what ardour and purity of affection he is loved and praised in heaven. The blessed angels are creatures perfectly holy, who, without either division or abatement in their affections, or interruption in their happy employment, obey, love, and glorify God with all their powers. Always employed in the delightful contemplation of his infinite goodness and other amiable perfections, swallowed up in the ocean of his love, they never cease crying out with all their might, "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of Hosts: all the earth is full of his glory, which shineth forth in all his works.<sup>1</sup> They cease not day or night saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come."<sup>2</sup> In the most profound annihilation of themselves they give all honour and glory to him alone, and professing their crowns to be entirely his gifts they cast them at his feet and sing, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power," &c.<sup>3</sup> Burning with the most ardent love and the most eager desire to praise more and more perfectly his infinite goodness and greatness, they continually repeat their hymns with new jubilation and an earnestness to outdo themselves, as they are every moment inebriated with fresh overflowing joy, and pierced more deeply with the darts of his sweet love. Can we call to mind those holy and glorious spirits without being penetrated with love and veneration? O truly happy creatures; we also desire to love and praise God; and we condemn the faintness of our desires. We rejoice in your ardour, and by it we pray you incessantly to praise God both for yourselves and us, pouring forth all your affections and enlarging and exerting all your powers, with the utmost effort of your strength; because he is infinitely above the love and praise of all creatures: he infinitely transcends all things out of himself, nor can the most perfect homages of all created beings ever be commensurate to his greatness, goodness, mercy, and boundless majesty. Whilst we invite you to his praise, with what regret, alas, do we reflect that we have often sinned, and daily continue to heap offences against him! Oh, may we cease to sin! may your flames, holy angels, kindle a fire of the like holy love in our souls! In our devotions we will unite our praises with those which you incessantly pour forth in your heavenly choirs, and animate ourselves to fervour by your example in this great employment.

God is pleased frequently to employ the ministry of his angels in affording us many helps, and in the government of this lower world. He can do all things by the simple act of his own will, and stands not in need

<sup>1</sup> Isa. vi. 3.<sup>2</sup> Apoc. iv. 8.<sup>3</sup> Apoc. v. 11.



of ministers to execute his decrees as earthly kings do. It is not from any want of power, but merely from his infinite goodness and wisdom, that he employs superior spirits in various dispensations of his providence concerning men. Zeal for the divine honour, fidelity in executing his will, and affection and charity for us, make these holy spirits most diligent in their commission. Upon how many occasions were Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and other patriarchs and prophets favoured with apparitions and visions of these holy spirits! How many mysteries did they reveal! How many blessings did they bring from God, sometimes to the church in general, sometimes to his faithful servants in particular! How many evils, both public and private, do they often avert! An angel sent by God relieved and comforted Agar in her despair.<sup>1</sup> Other angels delivered Lot from the burning of Sodom,<sup>2</sup> the three children from the flames,<sup>3</sup> Daniel from the lions,<sup>4</sup> St Peter from his chains,<sup>5</sup> and the apostles out of their dungeon.<sup>6</sup> God gave his law to the Jews by an angel who was his ambassador.<sup>7</sup> By angels he showed to St John the future state of his church,<sup>8</sup> and many wonderful visions to Daniel<sup>9</sup> and other prophets. They were his messengers in the execution of the principal mysteries relating to the incarnation, birth, flight, temptation, and agony of Christ. An angel conducted the Israelites into the land of promise.<sup>10</sup> The apostle St Jude mentions a contest which St Michael had with the devil about the burial of the body of Moses, and recommends humility, piety, and modesty in behaviour by the example of this archangel, who on that occasion used no curse, no harsh or reproachful word, but to repress the malicious fiend only said, "The Lord command thee."<sup>11</sup> St John describes a great battle of St Michael and the good angels with the devil and his angels,<sup>12</sup> which seems by the context not to belong properly to the expulsion of these latter out of heaven when they sinned, but to some efforts of the evil spirits when they were vanquished by Christ in the mystery of our redemption. By this victory of St Michael we see the concern of the good angels for the salvation of man, and the activity and success with which they exert themselves in his behalf. Angels carried the soul of Lazarus into the place of rest.<sup>13</sup> Their host will descend with Christ at the last day, and will assemble men before his tribunal.<sup>14</sup> The holy scriptures assure us that the angels are the ministers of God appointed to execute his orders, and to do his will in our favour.<sup>15</sup> God promises their ministry and succour to all that serve him.<sup>16</sup> Who is not astonished at the condescension with which the archangel Raphael accompanied the young Toby, and rescued him from all dangers? An angel wrestled all night with Jacob: another carried Habacuc by the hair to Babylon, to feed Daniel in the lions' den.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xvi. 8; xxi. 17.<sup>2</sup> Acts xii. 7.<sup>3</sup> Apoc. i. 1.<sup>4</sup> Jude ix.<sup>5</sup> Ps. ciii. 4; cii. 20.<sup>6</sup> Gen. xxii. 19.<sup>7</sup> Acts v. 19.<sup>8</sup> Dan. viii., ix., x.<sup>9</sup> Apoc. xii. 7.<sup>10</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 8; xc. 11; Baruch vi. 6.<sup>11</sup> Dan. iii. 49.<sup>12</sup> Acts vii. 52, and Heb. ii. 2.<sup>13</sup> Exod. xiv. 21, and Numb. xx. 10.<sup>14</sup> Luke xvi. 23.<sup>15</sup> Matt. xxiv., &c.<sup>16</sup> Dan. vi. 22.

That the good angels often intercede with God for us, and that their patronage is piously evoked, is an article of the Catholic faith. Jacob entreated with earnestness the angel with whom he had wrestled that he would give him his blessing;<sup>1</sup> and on his death-bed he prayed the angel who had conducted and protected him to bless his grandchildren, Ephraim and Manasses.<sup>2</sup> If the angels give us their blessing and do us greater offices, can we imagine that they do not pray to God for us? If Jacob prayed to his angel, this was certainly consonant to true religion and the practice of pious persons. The devils entreat God for permission to use their natural craft and strength to assail men with extraordinary temptations, as they did with regard to Job<sup>3</sup> and the apostles.<sup>4</sup> Christ prayed for St Peter that his faith should not fail under the assaults of Satan. The angels who are solicitous for us oppose these efforts of Satan against us by praying for us and otherwise. The prophet Daniel was informed in his visions how vigorously the guardian angel of Persia interposed in favour of that country, and much more, what good offices Michael and other angels did for the Jews, in removing obstacles which retarded their return from the captivity. The angel Gabriel told Daniel that he had exerted his efforts for this purpose in Persia one-and-twenty days, and that Michael, the prince or guardian angel of the Jews, came to his help,<sup>5</sup> so that they conquered the impediments. Gabriel added,<sup>6</sup> "From the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up that he might be strengthened and confirmed"; viz. to promote the deliverance of God's people. The same prophet, speaking of the cruel persecution of Antiochus, says,<sup>7</sup> "At that time Michael shall rise up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people." This implies that Michael would support the Machabees and other defenders of God's people, whose protector this archangel was. "Standing up" for them must mean principally by praying for them, as it is said of the priests and Levites.<sup>8</sup> More ancient books of the holy scripture mention visible succours of holy angels which the Jews, in their deliverance from the slavery of Egypt and passage to Canaan, experienced; also many among the patriarchs, several among the judges of the Jewish nation, and others.

It is clear from several of the above-mentioned examples, and many other passages of the holy scriptures, that the good angels pray for us. The prophet Zacharias was favoured with a vision of angels in the seventieth year of the desolation of Jerusalem and the cities of Juda, dated from the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem, in the ninth year of Sedecias; which seventieth year was the second of Darius Hystaspis, and the eighteenth from the beginning of the reign of Cyrus in Babylon and the end of the captivity. The prophet saw an angel in the shape of a man (probably Michael, the protector of the Jews) standing in a grove of myrtle-trees,

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxxii. 26.<sup>2</sup> Dan. x. 13<sup>3</sup> Gen. xlviii. 26<sup>4</sup> Dan. xi. 1.<sup>5</sup> Job. i.<sup>6</sup> Dan. xii. 1<sup>7</sup> Luke xxii. 41.<sup>8</sup> Deut. x. 8.

and several angels, the guardians of other provinces, came to him and said, "We have walked through the earth, and behold, all the earth is inhabited and is at rest." Then the angel made this prayer, "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Juda, with which thou hast been angry? This is now the seventieth year."<sup>1</sup> The Lord answered his prayer that he would return to Jerusalem in mercies, and that his house should be built in it. In the book of Job, Elihu says, "If there shall be an angel speaking for him among thousands,"<sup>2</sup> that is, if an angel chosen out of a thousand to be the guardian of a sinner shall pray to God for him, and bring him to repentance, the sick sinner shall recover his health. The angel Raphael told Toby, "When thou didst pray with tears, I offered thy prayers to the Lord,"<sup>3</sup> doubtless to recommend them to God by his own intercession. St John saw an angel offering to God the prayers of all the saints.<sup>4</sup> If the good angels pray for us, and often present our supplications to God, in order to strengthen them by their own prayers, they certainly know and hear our petitions. Jacob could not pray to the angel that he would bless his two boys<sup>5</sup> if the angel could not hear him. Isaias had no sooner complained that his lips were defiled but a seraph purified them with a burning coal from the altar.<sup>6</sup> How can the angels be offended at scandals given to the little ones that are committed by God to their charge<sup>7</sup> if they do not know them? How could they otherwise represent to God the afflictions of his people, as the prophets so often mention? In the first chapter of Zacharias the good angels (and the devil in the first and second chapters of Job) are said to walk over the earth, and to lay before God both the prayers and good works, and the neglects and sins of men; not as if he by his own all-piercing eye did not see them, but as witnesses of their actions, the ministers of divine providence in its dispensations towards them, and the patrons and defenders or the accusers of our souls.

The church has always invoked and paid a religious honour to the holy angels. Origen teaches that they assist us in our devotions, and join their supplications to ours. "The angel of the Christian," says he, "offers his prayers to God through the only high priest; himself also praying for him who is committed to his charge."<sup>8</sup> He tells us that the angels carry up our prayers to God, and bring back his blessings and gifts to us; but that Christians do not invoke or adore them as they do God.<sup>9</sup> He addresses a prayer to the angel of a person who is going to be baptized, that he would instruct him.<sup>10</sup> The martyr Nemesian and his companions, writing to St Cyprian, say, "Let us assist one another by our prayers, and beg that we may have God and Christ and the angels favourers in all our actions."<sup>11</sup> St Gregory Nazianzen writes, "The angelical powers are a succour to us

<sup>1</sup> Zachar. i. 12.<sup>2</sup> Job xxxiii. 23.<sup>3</sup> Tob. xii. 12.<sup>4</sup> Apoc. viii. 3, 4.<sup>5</sup> Gen. xlviii.<sup>6</sup> Isa. vi.<sup>7</sup> Matt. xviii.<sup>8</sup> Lib. viii. contra Cels. p. 400.<sup>9</sup> Lib. v. ib. p. 233.<sup>10</sup> Hom. i. in Ezech. p. 391.<sup>11</sup> Inter Ep. St Cypr. 77. p. 330

in all good.”<sup>1</sup> He prays the good angels to receive his soul at the hour of death; and threatens the devil with the sign of the cross if he should approach him.<sup>2</sup> St Ephrem says of heaven, “Where all the angels and saints of God reign, praying the Lord for us.”<sup>3</sup> He repeats, that the angels with joy offer our prayers to God.<sup>4</sup>

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 29:*

THE DEDICATION OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL THE ANGELS (THE FEAST OF THE HOLY ANGELS) or Michaelmas: St THEODATA, martyr, formerly a public sinner in Phillipi, who refused to offer false sacrifices and by her constancy encouraged seven hundred and fifty men (perhaps some troop of soldiers?) to step forth and declare themselves Christians; she was scourged, racked, and finally stoned to death, praying that He who received the good thief would not turn His mercy from her.

### SEPTEMBER 30

## ST JEROM, PRIEST AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

(A.D. 420)

[From his epistles and other works, and from other fathers and ancient historians. See Tillemont, t. xii.; Ceillier, t. x.; and his life compiled in French by Dom. Martianay, in 4to, in 1706, dedicated to the Abbess of Lauzun; and that in Latin by Villarsi, in the Verona edition of his works. Consult also Orsi, lib. xviii. n. 51; t. viii. p. 113; lib. xx. n. 31; t. ix. p. 77; Dolci de rebus gestis St Hieronymi, 4to. Anconæ, 1750; Stilling, t. viii. Sept. pp. 418, 699.]

ST JEROM, who is allowed to have been in many respects the most learned of all the Latin fathers, was born, not at Strigonium, now called Gran, situated upon the Danube in Lower Hungary, but at Stridonium, now Sdrigni, a small town upon the confines of Pannonia, Dalmatia, and Italy, near Aquileia. He had a brother much younger than himself whose name was Paulinian. His father, called Eusebius, was descended from a good family and had a competent estate; but, being persuaded that a good education is the most precious inheritance that a parent can leave to his children, took great care to have his son instructed in piety and in the first principles of literature at home, and afterwards sent him to Rome. St Jerom had there, for tutor, the famous pagan grammarian Donatus (well known for his commentaries on Virgil and Terence), also Victorinus the rhetorician, who by a decree of the senate was honoured with a statue in Trajan's square. In this city he became master of the Latin and Greek tongues, read the best writers in both languages with great application, and made such progress in oratory that he for some time pleaded at the bar: but being left without a guide, under the discipline of a heathen master, in a school where an exterior regard to decency in morals was all that was aimed at, he forgot the sentiments of true piety which had been instilled into him in his infancy, neglected sufficiently to restrain his passions, and was full only of worldly views. Jerom went out of this school free indeed from gross vices, but unhappily a stranger to a Christian

<sup>1</sup> Or. 40, p. 664.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. de Locis Beatis.

<sup>3</sup> Carm. 22, t. ii. p. 94.

<sup>4</sup> St Ephr. lib. de Virginit. p. 129.

spirit and enslaved to vanity and the more refined passions, as he afterwards confessed and bitterly lamented.

Being arrived at man's estate and very desirous of improving his studies, he resolved upon travelling in order to further this design. St Jerom, in his first journeys, was conducted by the divine mercy into the paths of virtue and salvation. A vehement thirst after learning put him upon making a tour through Gaul, where the Romans had erected several famous schools, especially at Marseilles, Toulouse, Bourdeaux, Autun, Lyons, and Triers. This latter was esteemed an imperial city, being in that age frequently honoured with the presence of the emperors, when Rome, by the attachment of many powerful senators to idolatry, and their regret for the loss of their ancient liberty and privileges, was not so agreeable a residence to its princes. The Emperor Gratian, a learned man and a great lover of learning, who appointed out of his own revenue fixed salaries for the public masters of rhetoric, and of the Greek and Latin languages in all great cities,<sup>1</sup> distinguished the schools of Gaul with special favours, and above the rest those of Triers, to whose professors he granted greater salaries than to those of other cities, and whither he drew Ausonius from Bourdeaux. By prudent regulations he forbade the students of this city to frequent public diversions or shows in the theatre, or to assist at great banquets or entertainments, and gave other strict orders for the regulation of their manners. Ausonius extols the eloquence and learning of the illustrious Harmonius and Ursulus, professors of eloquence at Triers.<sup>2</sup> It had been St Jerom's greatest pleasure at Rome to collect a good library and to read all the best authors: in this such was his passion that it made him sometimes forget to eat or drink. Cicero and Plautus were his chief delight. He purchased a great many books, copied several, and procured many to be transcribed by his friends.<sup>3</sup>

He arrived at Triers, with his friend Bonosus, not long before the year 370, and it was in this city that the sentiments of piety which he imbibed in his infancy were awaked, and his heart was entirely converted to God; so that, renouncing the vanity of his former pursuits and the irregularities of his life, he took a resolution to devote himself wholly to the divine service in a state of perpetual continence.<sup>4</sup> From this time his ardour for virtue far surpassed that with which he had before applied himself to profane sciences, and he converted the course of his studies into a new channel.

Tyranius Rufinus, famous first for his friendship, and afterwards for his controversies, with St Jerom, entered himself a monk at Aquileia in 370, as is clear both from his own and St Jerom's works.<sup>5</sup> St Jerom

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Theodos. 13. t. iii. lib. xi. pp. 39, 40.

<sup>2</sup> Auson. Ep. 18, p. 644.

<sup>3</sup> St Hier. Ep. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ep. 1, p. 3. See Dom Rivet, Hist. Littér. de la Fr. t. i. part 2, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Rufin. Apol. 1; St Hieron. Apol. 1 et 2 Chron. ad an. 376, &c.

shut himself up in this monastery at Aquileia for some time that he might with greater leisure and freedom pursue his studies, in the course of which he was closely linked in friendship with Rufinus, and with great grief saw himself, by some unknown accident, torn from his company.<sup>1</sup> From what quarter this storm arose is uncertain; though it seems to have come from his own family. For he mentions that, paying his friends a visit, he found his sister had been drawn aside from the path of virtue. He brought her to a deep sense of her duty, and engaged her to make a vow of perpetual continency, in which affair he probably met with those difficulties which obliged him, for the sake of his own peace, to leave the country: his aunt, Castorina, about the same time vowed her continency to God.

St Jerom returned to Rome, resolving to betake himself wholly to his studies and retirement. In his letters to Pope Damasus, he testifies that he received at Rome the sacrament of regeneration. Experience soon convinced him that neither his own country nor Rome were fit places for a life of perfect solitude, at which he aimed, wherefore he resolved to withdraw into some distant country. Bonosus, his countryman and relation, who had been the companion of all his studies and travels from his infancy, did not enter into his views on this occasion, but retired into a desert island on the coast of Dalmatia, and there led a monastic life. Evagrius, the celebrated priest of Antioch, who was come into the West upon the affairs of that church, offered himself to our saint to be his guide into the East; and Innocent, Heliodorus, and Hylas (who had been a servant of Melania), would needs bear him company.

Being arrived at Antioch, St Jerom made some stay in that city to attend the lectures of Apollinaris, who had not yet openly broached his heresy, and then read comments upon the scriptures with great reputation. St Jerom had carried nothing with him but his library and a sum of money to bear the charges of his journey. But Evagrius, who was rich, supplied him with all necessaries, and maintained several amanuenses to write for him and assist him in his studies. The saint having spent some time at Antioch, went into a hideous desert, lying between Syria and Arabia, in the country of the Saracens, where the holy abbot Theodosius received him with great joy. Jerom spent there four years in studies and the fervent exercises of piety. In this lonely habitation he had many fits of sickness, but suffered a much more severe affliction from violent temptations of impurity, which he describes as follows:<sup>2</sup> "In the remotest part of a wild and sharp desert which, being burnt up with the heats of the scorching sun, strikes with horror and terror even the monks that inhabit it, I seemed to myself to be in the midst of the delights and assemblies of Rome. I loved solitude, that in the bitterness of my soul I might more freely bewail my miseries and call upon my Saviour. My hideous emaciated limbs were

<sup>1</sup> St Hier. Ep. 1, alias 41, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 22, ad Eustochium, de Virgin, c. 3.

covered with sackcloth; my skin was parched dry and black, and my flesh was almost wasted away. The days I passed in tears and groans, and when sleep overpowered me against my will, I cast my wearied bones, which hardly hung together, upon the bare ground, not so properly to give them rest as to torture myself. I say nothing of my eating and drinking: for the monks in that desert, when they are sick, know no other drink but cold water, and look upon it as sensuality ever to eat anything dressed by fire. In this exile and prison, to which, for the fear of hell, I had voluntarily condemned myself, having no other company but scorpions and wild beasts, I many times found my imagination filled with lively representations of dances in the company of Roman ladies, as if I had been in the midst of them. My face was pale with fasting; yet my will felt violent assaults of irregular desires: in my cold body and in my parched-up flesh, which seemed dead before its death, concupiscence was able to live; and though I vigorously repressed all its sallies, it strove always to rise again and to cast forth more violent and dangerous flames. Finding myself abandoned, as it were, to the power of this enemy, I threw myself in spirit at the feet of Jesus, watering them with my tears, and I tamed my flesh by fasting whole weeks. I am not ashamed to disclose my temptations; but I grieve that I am not now what I then was. I often joined whole nights to the days, crying, sighing, and beating my breast till the desired calm returned. I feared the very cell in which I lived, because it was witness to the foul suggestions of my enemy; and being angry, and armed with severity against myself, I went alone into the most secret parts of the wilderness, and if I discovered anywhere a deep valley or a craggy rock, that was the place of my prayer, there I threw this miserable sack of my body. The same Lord is my witness, that after so many sobs and tears—after having in much sorrow looked long up to heaven, I felt most delightful comforts and interior sweetness; and these so great that, transported and absorbed, I seemed to myself to be amidst the choirs of angels, and glad and joyful I sung to God, "After thee, O Lord, we will run in the fragrantcy of thy celestial ointments."

In this manner does God, who often suffers the fidelity of his servants to be severely tried, strengthen them by his triumphant grace, and abundantly recompense their constancy. St Jerom, among the arms with which he fortified himself against this dangerous enemy, added to his corporeal austerities a new study, which he hoped would fix his rambling imagination and, by curbing his will, give him the victory over himself. This was, after having dealt only in polite and agreeable studies, to learn of a converted Jew the Hebrew alphabet, and form his mouth to the uncouth aspirations and difficult pronunciation of that language. "When my soul was on fire with bad thoughts," says he,<sup>1</sup> writing to the monk

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 15, ad. Rustic. p. 769.

Rusticus in 411, "that I might subdue my flesh, I became a scholar to a monk who had been a Jew, to learn of him the Hebrew alphabet; and after I had most diligently studied the judicious rules of Quintilian, the copious flowing eloquence of Cicero, the grave style of Fronto, and the smoothness of Pliny, I inured myself to hissing and broken-winded words. What labour it cost me, what difficulties I went through, how often I despaired and left off, and how I began again to learn, both I myself who felt the burden can witness, and they also who lived with me. And I thank our Lord that I now gather sweet fruit from the bitter seed of those studies." However, he still continued to read the classics with an eagerness and pleasure which degenerated into a passion, and gave him just remorse, it being an impediment to the perfect disengagement of his affections and the entire reign of God in his heart. Of this disorder he was cured by the merciful hand of God. The saint, in his long epistle to Eustochium, exhorting that virgin, who had embraced a religious state, to read only the holy scriptures and other books of piety and devotion, relates that, being seized with a grievous sickness in the desert, in the heat of a burning fever he fell into a trance or dream, in which he seemed to himself arraigned before the dreadful tribunal of Christ. Being asked his profession, he answered that he was a Christian. "Thou liest," said the judge, "thou art a Ciceronian: for the works of that author possess thy heart."<sup>1</sup> The judge thereupon condemned him to be severely scourged by angels; the remembrance of which chastisement left a strong impression upon his imagination after his recovery, and gave him a deep sense of his fault. He promised the judge never more to read those profane authors. He indeed declares this to have been a dream:<sup>2</sup> nevertheless he looked upon it as a divine admonition, by which he was put in mind of a fault incompatible with the perfection to which every Christian, especially a monk, ought to aspire.

A great schism at that time divided the church of Antioch, some acknowledging Meletius, and others Paulinus, patriarch. The breach was considerably widened when the Apollinarist heretics chose Vitalis, a man of their sect, bishop of that great city. The monks in the desert of Chalcis warmly took part in this unhappy division, and were for compelling St Jerom to declare to which of these candidates he adhered. Another controversy among them was, whether one or three hypostases were to be acknowledged in Christ. The Greek word *hypostasis* was then ambiguous, being by some used for *nature*, by others for *person* or *subsistence*; though it is now taken only for the latter. The Arians on one side, and the Sabellians on the other, sought to ensnare the faithful under the ambiguity of this word. Our saint therefore stood upon his guard against their captious artifices, and answered with caution that if Nature was understood

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 18, alias 22, ad Eustoch. de Virginit.

<sup>2</sup> St Hieron. Apol. lib. i.



by this word, there was but one in God; but if Person, that there were three. Teased, however, by these importunities, and afflicted with a bad state of health, he left his wilderness, after having passed in it four years, and went to Antioch to his friend Evagrius. A little before he left his desert, he wrote two letters to consult St Damasus, who had been raised to the papal throne at Rome in 336, what course he ought to steer. In the first he says,<sup>1</sup> "I am joined in communion with your holiness, that is, with the chair of Peter; upon that rock I know the church is built. Whoever gathers not with you, scatters; that is, he who is not Christ's belongs to Antichrist." This letter was written towards the end of the year 376 or in the beginning of 377. The saint, not receiving a speedy answer, sent soon after another letter to Damasus on the same subject, in which he conjures his holiness to answer his difficulties and not despise a soul for which Jesus Christ died. "On one side," said he, "the Arian fury rages, supported by the secular power: on the other side, the church (at Antioch) being divided into three parts, each would needs draw me to itself. All the time I cease not to cry out, 'Whoever is united to the chair of Peter he is mine.'"<sup>2</sup> The answer of Damasus is not extant; but it is certain that he and all the West acknowledged Paulinus patriarch of Antioch, and St Jerom received from his hands at Antioch the holy order of priesthood before the end of the year 377; to which promotion he only consented on this condition, that he should not be obliged to serve that or any other church in the functions of his ministry. Soon after his ordination he went into Palestine and visited the principal holy places situated in different parts of that country, but made Bethlehem his most usual residence. He had recourse to the ablest Jewish doctors to inform himself of all particulars relating to all the remarkable places mentioned in the sacred history,<sup>3</sup> and he neglected no means to perfect himself in the knowledge of the Hebrew tongue. For this he addressed himself to the most skilful among the Jews: one of his masters, by whose instructions he exceedingly improved himself, spoke Hebrew with such gracefulness, true accent, and propriety of expression that he passed among the Jewish doctors for a true Chaldean.<sup>4</sup>

About the year 380 our saint went to Constantinople, there to study the holy scriptures under St Gregory Nazianzen, who was then bishop of that city. In several parts of his works he mentions this with singular satisfaction and gratitude for the honour and happiness of having had so great a master in expounding the divine oracles as that most eloquent and learned doctor. Upon St Gregory's leaving Constantinople, in 381, he returned into Palestine. Not long after he was called to Rome, as he testifies.<sup>5</sup> He went thither in the same year, 381, with St Paulinus of

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 14. alias 57, ad Damas, p. 19, t. iv.

<sup>2</sup> St Hier. Præf. in. Paralip.

<sup>3</sup> Ep. 16, alias 58, ad Damas, p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> T. iii. ad Damas, p. 515.

<sup>5</sup> Ep. 16, et 27, ed. Vet.

Antioch and St Epiphanius, who undertook that journey to attend a council which Damasus held about the schism of Antioch. The two bishops stayed the winter in Rome and then returned into the East; but Pope Damasus detained St Jerom with him, and employed him as his secretary in writing his letters, in answering the consultations of bishops, and in other important affairs of the church.<sup>1</sup>

Our holy doctor soon gained at Rome a universal love and esteem, on account of his religious life, his humility, eloquence, and learning. Many among the chief nobility, clergy, and monks sought to be instructed by him in the holy scriptures and in the rules of Christian perfection. He was charged likewise with the conduct of many devout ladies, as St Marcella, her sister Asella, and their mother Albina; Melania the elder (who is not less famous by the praises of St Jerom<sup>2</sup> than by those of Rufinus), Marcellina, Felicitas, Lea, Fabiola, Læta, Paula and her daughters, with many others. The holy widow, St Marcella, having lost her husband in the seventh month after her marriage, refused to marry Cerealis, who had been consul, retired to a country-house near Rome, and made choice of a monastic life forty years before this, in 341, under Pope Julius I, when St Athanasius came to Rome, from whom she received an account of the life of St Antony, who was then living. St Marcella died in 412, and St Jerom wrote her funeral elegy to her spiritual daughter, Principia.<sup>3</sup> Lea was at the head of a monastery of virgins, whom she instructed more by example than by words. She used to spend whole nights in prayer; her clothes and food were very mean, but free from all affectation or ostentation. She was so humble that she appeared to be the servant of all her sisters, though she had formerly been mistress of a great number of slaves. The church honours her memory on the 22nd of March. St Jerom wrote her funeral elegy after her death, in 384.<sup>4</sup>

Asella was consecrated to God at the age of ten years, and at twelve retired into a cell, where she lay on the ground, and lived upon bread and water, fasting all the year, and being often two or three days without eating, especially in Lent; yet her austerities did not impair her health. She used to work with her hands, and never went abroad unless it was to visit the churches of the martyrs, and that she did without being seen. Nothing was more cheerful and pleasing than her severity, nor more grave than her sweetness. Her very speech proclaimed her love of recollection and silence, and her silence spake aloud to the heart. She never spoke to any man unless upon her spiritual necessities; even her sister Marcella could hardly ever see her. Her conduct was simple and regular, and in the midst of Rome she led a life of solitude. She was fifty years old in 384.<sup>5</sup> Fabiola was of

<sup>1</sup> St Hier. in Apol. ad Pammac, et Ep. 11.

<sup>2</sup> St Hier. Ep. 1, alias 41, Ep. 2, alias 5, Ep. 22, alias 25.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. p. 778. See January 31.

<sup>4</sup> T. ii. par. 2, p. 51.

<sup>5</sup> St Hier. Ep. 15, ad Marcell. ib. p. 52.

the illustrious Fabian family, and being obliged to be separated from her husband on account of his disorderly conduct, made use of the liberty allowed her by the civil laws, and took a second husband. After his death, finding this had been against the laws of the gospel, she did public penance in the most austere and exemplary manner. After this she sold all her estate and erected a hospital for the sick in Rome, where she served them with her own hands. She gave immense alms to several monasteries, which were built upon the coasts of Tuscany, and to the poor in Italy and Palestine.<sup>1</sup> She died at Rome about the year 400. The most illustrious of the Roman ladies whom St Jerom instructed was St Paula,<sup>2</sup> who engaged him to accept of a lodging in her house during his abode in Rome, that she and her family might more easily have recourse to him for their spiritual direction. He tells us that Marcella, Paula, Blesilla, and Eustochium spoke, wrote, and recited the Psalter in the Hebrew as perfectly as in the Greek and Latin tongues. The instruction of these and many other devout persons did not so engross our saint's time and attention but he was always ready to acquit himself of all that Pope Damasus recommended to his care and, by other labours, to render important services to the catholic church. After having stayed about three years at Rome, St Jerom resolved to return into the East, there to seek a quiet retreat. He embarked at Porto in the month of August, in 385, with his young brother, Paulinian, a priest called Vincent, and some others, having been attended from Rome to the ship by many pious persons of distinction. Landing at Cyprus, he was received with great joy by St Epiphanius. At Antioch he visited the Bishop Paulinus, who, when he departed, attended him a considerable part of the way to Palestine. He arrived at Jerusalem in the middle of winter, near the close of the year 385, and in the following spring went into Egypt to improve himself in sacred learning and in the most perfect practices of the monastic institute. At Alexandria he, for a month, received the lessons of the famous Didymus, and profited very much by his conversation in 386. He visited the chief monasteries of Egypt; after which he returned into Palestine and retired to Bethlehem. St Paula, who had followed him thither, built for him a monastery and put under his direction also the monastery of nuns which she founded and governed. St Jerom was soon obliged to enlarge his own monastery, and for that purpose sent his brother Paulinian into Dalmatia to sell an estate which he still had there. For, as Sanchez and Suarez remark from this example, anciently private religious men could retain the dominion, or a property in estates, though by their vows they renounced the administration, unless they exercised it by the commission of the abbot. St Jerom also erected a hospital, in which he entertained pilgrims. It was thought that he could not be further instructed in the

<sup>1</sup> St Jerom in two letters to Fabiola, pp. 574, 586, and in her funeral elegy, which he wrote to Oceanus, p. 657.

<sup>2</sup> See her life, January 26

knowledge of the Hebrew language; but this was not his own judgment of the matter; and he applied again to a famous Jewish master, called Bar-Ananias, who, for a sum of money, came to teach him in the night-time, lest the Jews should know it.<sup>1</sup> Church history, which is called one of the eyes of theology, became a favourite study of our holy doctor. All the heresies which were broached in the church in his time found him a warm and indefatigable adversary.

Whilst he was an inhabitant of the desert of Chalcis, he drew his pen against the Luciferian schismatics. After the unhappy council of Rimini, in which many orthodox bishops had been betrayed, contrary to their meaning, into a subscription favourable to the Arians, St Athanasius, in his council at Alexandria, in 362, and other Catholic prelates, came to a resolution to admit those prelates to communion upon their repentance. This indulgence displeased Lucifer, Bishop of Cagliari, a person famous for his zeal and writings against the Arians in the reign of Constantius. St Jerom composed a dialogue against Luciferians, in which he plainly demonstrates, by the acts of the council of Rimini, that in it the bishops were imposed upon. In the same work he confutes the private heresy of Hilary, a Luciferian deacon at Rome, that the Arians and all other heretics and schismatics were to be rebaptized; on which account St Jerom calls him the Deucalion of the world.<sup>2</sup>

Our holy doctor, whilst he resided at Rome in the time of Pope Damasus, in 384, composed his book against Helvidius, "On the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary."<sup>3</sup> That heretic was an Arian priest, a disciple of the impious Auxentius, of Milan, and had wrote a book, in which he broached this error, that Mary did not remain always a virgin, but had other children by St Joseph after the birth of Christ. This heresy was also adopted by Jovinian, who, having spent his youth at Milan in fasting, manual labour, and other austerities of a monastic state, left his monastery, went to Rome, and there began to spread his errors, which may be chiefly reduced to these four: That they who have been regenerated by baptism with perfect faith cannot be again vanquished by the devil. That all who shall have preserved the grace of baptism will have an equal reward in heaven. That virgins have no greater merit before God than married women if they are equal in other virtues; and that the Mother of God was not always a virgin. Lastly, That abstinence from certain meats is unprofitable.<sup>4</sup> Jovinian lived at Rome in a manner suitable to his sensual principles. Though he still called himself a monk, and observed celibacy, he threw off his black habit, wore fine white stuffs, linen, and silks, curled his hair, frequented the baths and houses of entertainment, and was fond of sumptuous feasts and delicate wines. St Pammachius,

<sup>1</sup> St Hier. Ep. 85.<sup>2</sup> St Hier. Op. t. iv, par. 2, p. 289.<sup>3</sup> Ib. p. 130.<sup>4</sup> St Ambr. Ep. 42; St Aug. de hæret. c. 82; St Hieron. lib. in Jovinian.

and certain other noble laymen, were scandalized at this new doctrine, and having met with a writing of Jovinian in which these errors were contained, carried it to Pope Siricius, who, assembling his clergy in 390, condemned the same, cut off Jovinian and eight others (who are named together as authors of this new heresy) from the communion of the church. Upon this, Jovinian and the rest that were condemned withdrew to Milan, and Siricius sent thither the sentence of condemnation he had published against them, with a brief confutation of their errors, so that they were rejected there by everybody with horror and driven out of the city. St Ambrose also held a council of seven bishops, who happened then to be at Milan, in which these errors were again condemned.<sup>1</sup> Two years after this, St Jerom wrote two books against Jovinian.<sup>2</sup> The holy doctor wrote his Apology to Pammachius, sometimes called his third book against Jovinian,<sup>3</sup> in which he shows, from his own book, which had raised this clamour, that he commended marriage as honourable and holy, and protests that he condemns not even second or third marriages. He repeated the same thing in a letter which he wrote to Domnio, about the same time and upon the same subject.<sup>4</sup>

In the year 404 Riparius, a priest in Spain, wrote to St Jerom to acquaint him that Vigilantius, a native of Convenæ, now called Comminges, in Gaul, but a priest of Barcelona, depreciated the merit of holy virginity, and condemned the veneration of relics, calling those who paid it idolaters and Cinerarians, or worshippers of ashes. St Jerom, in his answer, exclaimed loudly against those novelties, and said: "We do not adore the relics of the martyrs; but we honour them, that we may adore him whose martyrs they are. We honour the servants, that the respect which is paid to them may be reflected back on the Lord." He prayed Riparius to send him Vigilantius's book, which he no sooner received than he set himself to confute it in a very sharp style.<sup>5</sup> In order to show that the saints pray for us, St Jerom saith, "If the apostles and martyrs, being still living upon earth, can pray for other men, how much more may they do it after their victories? Have they less power now they are with Jesus Christ?" He insists much on the miracles wrought at their tombs. Vigilantius said they were for the sake of the infidels. The holy doctor answers, they would still be no less a proof of the power of the martyrs and, testifying his respect for these relics and holy places, he says of himself, "When I have been molested with anger, evil thoughts, or nocturnal illusions, I have not dared to enter the churches of the martyrs." He mentions that the bishops of Rome offered up sacrifices to God over the venerable bones of the apostles Peter and Paul, and made altars of their tombs. He accuseth Eunomius of being the author of this heresy, and says that, if his new doctrine were

<sup>1</sup> St Ambr. Ep. 42, ad Siricium, p. 968.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. t. iv., p. 244.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. adv. Vigilant, t. iv. par. 2, p. 286.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. t. iv. par. 2, p. 144.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Ep. 37, ad Ripar. p. 279

true, all the bishops in the world would be in an error. He defends the institution of vigils and the monastic state; and says that a monk seeks his own security by flying occasions and dangers, because he mistrusteth his own weakness and is sensible that there is no safety if a man sleeps near a serpent. St Jerom often speaks of the saints in heaven praying for us.

Our saint was also engaged in a long war against Origenism. Few ever made more use of Origen's works, and no one seemed a greater admirer of his erudition than St Jerom declared himself for a considerable time;<sup>1</sup> but, finding in the East that several monks and others had been seduced into grievous errors by the authority of his name and some of his writings, our saint joined St Epiphanius in warmly opposing the spreading evil. This produced a violent quarrel between him and his old friend Rufinus, after an intimacy of twenty-five years; the latter everywhere extolling the authority of Origen, and having translated into Latin the most erroneous of all his works, though it afterwards appeared by his conduct that he had no design to favour the pestilential heresies of the Origenists, who denied the eternity of the torments of hell, held the pre-existence of souls, the plurality of worlds succeeding one another to eternity, and other errors. St Jerom could suffer no heresy to pass without his censure. He was deeply concerned to hear of the plundering of Rome by Alaric in 410, and of the cruel famine which succeeded that calamity. When Demetrias, daughter of the consul Olibrius, took the religious veil at Carthage, her mother Juliana and her grandmother Proba wrote to St Jerom, praying him to give her some instructions for her conduct. In order to comply with their request, he wrote her a long letter, in which he directed her how she was to serve God, recommending to her pious reading, the exercise of penance, constant but moderate fasting, obedience, humility, modesty, almsdeeds, prayers at all hours of the day, and working daily with her hands. He would have her rather choose to dwell in a nunnery, with other virgins, than to live alone, as at that time some did.

Nothing has rendered the name of St Jerom so famous as his critical labours on the holy scriptures. For this the church acknowledges him to have been raised by God through a special providence, and particularly assisted from above, and she styles him the greatest of all her doctors in expounding the divine oracles. Pope Clement VIII scruples not to call him a man, in translating the holy scriptures, divinely assisted and inspired. He was furnished with the greatest helps for such an undertaking; living many years upon the spot, whilst the remains of ancient places, names, customs which were still recent, and other circumstances, set before his eyes a clearer representation of many things recorded in holy writ than

<sup>1</sup> See his letter to Paula, written before the year 392, p. 67; also lib. ii. in Michæam *Præf. lib. de Nominib. Hebraic, &c.*; likewise Rufinus *Apolog. lib. ii.*

it is possible to have at a great distance of place and time. The Greek and Chaldaic were then living languages, and the Hebrew, though it had ceased to be such from the time of the captivity, was not less perfectly understood and spoken among the doctors of the law in its full extent, and with the true pronounciation. It was carefully cultivated in the Jewish academy, or great school of Tiberias, out of which St Jerom had a master. It is long since become very imperfect, reduced to a small number of radical words, and only to be learned from the Hebrew Bible, the only ancient book in the world extant in that language. Most of the Rabbinical writers are more likely to mislead us in the study of the Hebrew sacred text than to direct us in it; so that we have now no means to come at many succours which St Jerom had for this task. Among others, the Hexapla of Origen, which he possessed pure and entire, were not the least; and, by comparing his version with the present remains of those of Aquila, Theodotio, and Symmachus, we find he had often recourse to them, especially to that of Symmachus.<sup>1</sup> Above other conditions, it is necessary that an interpreter of the holy scriptures be a man of prayer and sincere piety. This alone can obtain light and succour from heaven, give to the mind a turn and temper which are necessary for being admitted into the sanctuary of the divine oracles, and present the key. Our holy doctor was prepared, by a great purity of heart, and a life spent in penance and holy contemplation, before he was called by God to this important undertaking.

A Latin translation of the Bible was made from the Greek in the time of the apostles, and probably approved or recommended by some of them, especially, according to Rufinus,<sup>2</sup> by St Peter who, as he says, sat twenty-five years at Rome. In the fourth century great variations had crept into the copies, as St Jerom mentions, so that almost every one differed.<sup>3</sup> For many that understood Greek undertook to translate anew some part, or to make some alterations from the original.<sup>4</sup> However, as Blanchini observes, these alterations seem to have been all grafted upon, or inserted in, the first translation; for they seem all to have gone under the name of the Latin Vulgate, or Common Translation. Amongst them one obtained the name of the Italic, perhaps because it was chiefly used in Italy and Rome; and this was far preferable to all the other Latin editions, as St Austin testifies. To remedy the inconvenience of this variety of editions, and to correct the faults of bold or careless copiers, Pope Damasus commissioned St Jerom to revise and correct the Latin version of the gospels by the original Greek, which this holy doctor executed to the great satisfaction of the whole church.<sup>5</sup> He afterwards did the same with the rest of the

<sup>1</sup> See Calmet, Diss. sur la Vulgate.

<sup>2</sup> Invest. 2. <sup>3</sup> Hieron. Præf. in Josue.

<sup>4</sup> St Aug. de Christ. lib. ii. c. 11.

<sup>5</sup> St Hier. Præf. in Evang. ad Damas. t. i. p. 4261; St Aug. Ep. 71, ad Hieron.

New Testament.<sup>1</sup> This work of St Jerom's differs very much in the words from the ancient Italic. It insensibly took place in all the Western churches, and is the Latin Vulgate of the New Testament, which is now everywhere in use. The edition of the Greek Septuagint which was inserted in Origen's Hexapla, being the most exact extant, St Jerom corrected by it the ancient Italic of many books of the Old Testament, and twice the Psalter: first, by order of Pope Damasus, at Rome, about the year 382; and a second time at Bethlehem, about the year 389.

His new translation of the books of the Old Testament, writ in Hebrew, made from that original text, was a more noble and a more difficult undertaking. Many motives concurred to engage him in this work; as, the earnest entreaties of many devout and illustrious friends, the preference of the original to any version how venerable soever, and the necessity of answering the Jews, who in all disputations would allow no other. He did not translate the books in order, but began by the book of Kings and took the rest in hand at different times. This translation of St Jerom's was received in many churches in the time of St Gregory the Great, who gave it the preference.<sup>2</sup> And in a short time after, St Isidore of Seville wrote that all churches made use of it.<sup>3</sup> They retained the ancient Italic version of the Psalter, which they were accustomed to sing in the divine office; but admitted by degrees, in some places the first, in others the second correction of St Jerom upon the Seventy; and this is printed in the Vulgate Bible, not his translation. The old Italic, without his correction, is still sung in the Church of the Vatican and in St Mark's, at Venice. The books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, the two books of the Machabees; the prophecy of Baruch, the epistle of Jeremy, the additions at the end of Esther, and thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Daniel, and the Canticle of the Three Children, are in the ancient Vulgate, because they were not translated by St Jerom, not being extant in Hebrew or Chaldaic. The rest of the Old Testament in the present Vulgate is taken from the translation of St Jerom, except certain passages retained from the old Vulgate or Italic.

This saint ascertained the geographical description of ancient Palestine by translating, correcting, and enlarging Eusebius's book on "The Holy Places," and by his letters to Dardanus and Fabiola. In several little treatises and epistles he has cleared a great number of critical difficulties relating to the Hebrew text of the Holy Bible. In his commentaries "On the Prophets," he inquires after the sense of the Hebrew text or truth, as he calls it, to which he scrupulously adheres, though he compares it with all the ancient Greek translations. He adds short allegorical explications, and professes that he sometimes inserts certain opinions and

<sup>1</sup> St Hier. in catal. c. 135.

<sup>2</sup> St Greg. M. lib. i. hom. 10, n. 6, in Ezech. lib. xx. Mor. in cap. 30, Job. cap. 32, n. 62.

<sup>3</sup> St Isidore, lib. i. de Offic. Eccl.



interpretations of Origen and others, without adopting or approving them. His commentary on St Matthew he calls only an essay which he wrote in the compass of a few days to satisfy the importunity of a friend, with an intention to enlarge and improve it when he should have leisure for such an undertaking, which he never found.

St Jerom, toward the end of his life, was obliged to interrupt his studies by an incursion of barbarians, who penetrated through Egypt into Palestine,<sup>1</sup> and, some time after, by the violences and persecutions of the Pelagians, who, after the council of Diospolis, in 416, relying on the protection of John of Jerusalem, sent the year following a troop of seditious banditti to Bethlehem to assault the holy monks and nuns who lived there under the direction of St Jerom.<sup>2</sup> Some were beaten, and a deacon was killed by them. The heretics set fire to all the monasteries and reduced them to ashes. St Jerom with great difficulty escaped their fury by a timely flight, retiring to a strong castle. After this storm, St Jerom continued his exercises and labours, hated by all enemies of the church, but beloved and revered by all good men, as St Sulpicius Severus and St Austin testify.<sup>3</sup> Having triumphed over all vices, subdued the infernal monsters of heresies, and made his life a martyrdom of penance and labours, at length by a fever, in a good old age, he was released from the prison of his body, in the year 420, on the 30th of September. His festival is mentioned in the Sacramentary of St Gregory and in the Martyrologies of Bede, Usuard, &c. He was buried in a vault at the ruins of his monastery at Bethlehem; but his remains lie at present in the Church of St Mary Major at Rome.

Of all commentaries those are most useful which expound the mysteries of faith, or dwell on and enforce Christian virtues by motives founded in the literal genuine sense of the sacred writings, in which inspired words, the perfect spirit, and, as it were, the marrow of all virtues is contained. It is only by assiduous humble meditation on the sacred text that its inexhausted riches in this respect, concealed in every tittle, can be understood. We must bring with us that spirit of prayer and that humble docility by which so many holy doctors have been rendered faithful interpreters of the word of God. The tradition of the church must be our direction. Without an humble submission to this light we are sure to be led astray; and the most learned men who do not stick close to this rule (as experience and the most sacred authority conspire to teach us) tread in the steps of all those whose study of the scriptures has hurt the church instead of serving her, as Dr Hare, the learned Bishop of Chichester, observes. "For," says he, "the orthodox faith does not depend upon the scriptures considered in themselves, but as explained by catholic tradition." As the solid inter-

<sup>1</sup> St Hier. Ep. 78, ad Paulin, p. 643.

<sup>2</sup> St Aug. de Gestis Pelag. c. 36, t. x.

<sup>3</sup> Sulp. Sev. Dial. c. 4; St Aug. Ep. 82, n. 30, p. 201.

pretation of the sacred books is founded in the genuine and literal sense, to give this its fullest extent and force in every particle the aid of sober criticism is to be called in; in which, among the Latin fathers, no one equals St Jerom.

*The following feasts are celebrated on September 30 :*

ST GREGORY, Bishop of Cæsaria in Cappadocia, surnamed the Apostle of Armenia and the Illuminator; he left several discourses full of heavenly wisdom and an exhortation to his countrymen amongst whom he laboured: ST HONORIUS, Archbishop of Canterbury, one of those sent by St Gregory to convert the English nation to Christ; he died 30th September 653, after seeing many servants of God working in this country: and ST JEROM (430), priest and Doctor of the Church, the most learned of all the Latin Fathers.

OCTOBER 1

## ST REMIGIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF RHEIMS, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 533)

[From his ancient life now lost, but abridged by Fortunatus, and his life compiled by Archbishop Hincmar, with a history of the translation of his relics. See also St Gregory of Tours, lib. ii. ; Fleury, lib. xxix. n. 44, &c. ; Ceillier, t. xvi. ; Rivet. Hist. Littér. de la Fr. t. iii. p. 155 ; Suysken the Bollandist, t. i. Oct. pp. 59, 187.]

ST REMIGIUS, the great apostle of the French nation, was one of the brightest lights of the Gaulish church, illustrious for his learning, eloquence, sanctity, and miracles. An episcopacy of seventy years, and many great actions, have rendered his name famous in the annals of the church. His very birth was wonderful, and his life was almost a continued miracle of divine grace. His father, Emilius, and his mother, Cilinia, both descended of noble Gaulish families, enjoyed an affluent fortune, lived in splendour suitable to their rank at the castle of Laon, and devoted themselves to the exercise of all Christian virtues. St Remigius seems to have been born in the year 439. He had two brothers older than himself, Principius, Bishop of Soissons, and another whose name is not known, but who was father of St Lupus, who was afterwards one of his uncle's successors in the episcopal see of Soissons. A hermit, named Montanus, foretold the birth of our saint to his mother; and the pious parents had a special care of his education, looked upon him as a child blessed by heaven, and were careful to put him into the best hands.

St Remigius had an excellent genius, made great progress in learning, and, in the opinion of St Apollinaris Sidonius, who was acquainted with him in the earlier part of his life, he became the most eloquent person in that age.<sup>1</sup> He was remarkable from his youth for his extraordinary devotion and piety, and for the severity of his morals. A secret apartment, in which he spent a great part of his time in close retirement, in the castle of Laon, whilst he lived there, was standing in the ninth century, and was visited with devout veneration when Hincmar wrote. Our saint, earnestly thirsting after greater solitude and the means of a more sublime perfection, left his father's house and made choice of a retired abode, where, having only God for witness, he abandoned himself to the fervour of his zeal in fasting, watching, and prayer. The episcopal see of Rheims becoming vacant by the death of Bennagius, Remigius, though only twenty-two years of age,

<sup>1</sup> Lib. ix. Ep. 7.

was compelled, notwithstanding his extreme reluctance, to take upon him that important charge; his extraordinary abilities seeming to the bishops of the province a sufficient reason for dispensing with the canons in point of age. In this new dignity, prayer, meditation on the holy scriptures, the instruction of the people, and the conversion of infidels, heretics, and sinners were the constant employment of the holy pastor. Such was the fire and unction with which he announced the divine oracles to all ranks of men that he was called by many a second St Paul. St Apollinaris Sidonius<sup>1</sup> was not able to find terms to express his admiration of the ardent charity and purity with which this zealous bishop offered at the altar an incense of sweet odour to God, and of the zeal with which by his words he powerfully subdued the wildest hearts and brought them under the yoke of virtue, inspiring the lustful with the love of purity and moving hardened sinners to bewail their offences with tears of sincere compunction. The same author, who for his eloquence and piety was one of the greatest lights of the church in that age, testifies<sup>2</sup> that he procured copies of the sermons of this admirable bishop, which he esteemed an invaluable treasure; and says that in them he admired the loftiness of the thoughts, the judicious choice of the epithets, the gracefulness and propriety of the figures, and the justness, strength, and closeness of the reasoning. Another main excellency of these sermons consisted in the sublimity of the divine maxims which they contained, and the unction and sincere piety with which they were delivered; but the holy bishop's sermons and zealous labours derived their greatest force from the sanctity of his life, which was supported by an extraordinary gift of miracles. Thus was St Remigius qualified and prepared by God to be made the apostle of a great nation.

After Gaul had been for the space of about five hundred years one of the richest and most powerful provinces of the Roman empire, it fell into the hands of the French; but these new masters, far from extirpating or expelling the old Roman or Gaulish inhabitants, became, by a coalition with them, one people, and took up their language and manners. Clovis, at his accession to the crown, was only fifteen years old. He became the greatest conqueror of his age, and is justly styled the founder of the French monarchy. Even whilst he was a pagan he treated the Christians, especially the bishops, very well; spared the churches, and honoured holy men, particularly St Remigius, to whom he caused one of the vessels of his church, which a soldier had taken away, to be returned, and because the man made some demur, slew him with his own hand. St Clotildis, whom he married in 493, earnestly endeavoured to persuade him to embrace the faith of Christ; but he held out a long time against all her arguments, till, on the following occasion, God was pleased wonderfully to bring him to the confession of his holy name, and to dissipate that fear of the world

<sup>1</sup> Lib. viii. c. 14.<sup>2</sup> Lib. ix. Ep. 7.

which chiefly held him back so long, he being apprehensive lest his pagan subjects should take umbrage at such a change.

The Suevi and Alemanni in Germany assembled a numerous and valiant army, and, under the command of several kings, passed the Rhine, hoping to dislodge their countrymen the Franks, and obtain for themselves the glorious spoils of the Roman empire in Gaul. Clovis marched to meet them near his frontiers, and one of the fiercest battles recorded in history was fought at Tolbiac. In this engagement the king had given the command of the infantry to his cousin, Sigebert, fighting himself at the head of the cavalry. The shock of the enemy was so terrible that Sigebert was in a short time carried wounded out of the field, and the infantry was entirely routed and put to flight. Clovis saw the whole weight of the battle falling on his cavalry; yet stood his ground, fighting himself like a lion, covered with blood and dust, and encouraging his men to exert their utmost strength: he performed with them wonderful exploits of valour. Notwithstanding these efforts, they were at length borne down, and began to flee and disperse themselves; nor could they be rallied by the commands and entreaties of their king, who saw the battle upon which his empire depended quite desperate. Clotildis had said to him in taking leave, "My lord, you are going to conquest; but in order to be victorious, invoke the God of the Christians: he is the sole Lord of the universe, and is styled the God of armies. If you address yourself to him with confidence, nothing can resist you. Though your enemies were a hundred against one, you would triumph over them." The king called to mind these her words in his present extremity, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, said, with tears, "O Christ, whom Clotildis invokes as Son of the living God, I implore thy succour. I have called upon my gods, and find they have no power. I therefore invoke thee—I believe in thee. Deliver me from my enemies, and I will be baptized in thy name." No sooner had he made this prayer than his scattered cavalry began to rally about his person; the battle was renewed with fresh vigour, and the chief king and generalissimo of the enemy being slain, the whole army threw down their arms and begged for quarter. Clovis granted them their lives and liberty upon condition that the country of the Suevi, in Germany, should pay him an annual tribute. This miraculous victory was gained in the fifteenth year of his reign, of Christ 496.

Clovis, from that memorable day, thought of nothing but of preparing himself for the holy laver of regeneration. In his return from this expedition he passed by Toul, and there took with him St Vedast, a holy priest who led a retired life in that city, that he might be instructed by him in the faith during his journey: so impatient was he to fulfil his vow of becoming a Christian, that the least wilful delay appeared to him criminal. The queen, upon this news, sent privately to St Remigius to come to her, and

went with him herself to meet the king in Champagne. Clovis no sooner saw her, but he cried out to her, "Clovis has vanquished the Alemanni, and you have triumphed over Clovis. The business you have so much at heart is done; my baptism can be no longer delayed." The queen answered, "To the God of hosts is the glory of both these triumphs due." She encouraged him forthwith to accomplish his vow, and presented to him St Remigius as the most holy bishop in his dominions. This great prelate continued his instruction, and prepared him for baptism by the usual practices of fasting, penance, and prayer. Clovis suggested to him that he apprehended the people that obeyed him would not be willing to forsake their gods, but said he would speak to them according to his instructions. He assembled the chiefs of his nation for this purpose; but they prevented his speaking, and cried out with a loud voice, "My lord, we abandon mortal gods, and are ready to follow the immortal God, whom Remigius teaches." St Remigius and St Vedast therefore instructed and prepared them for baptism. Many bishops repaired to Rheims for this solemnity, which they judged proper to perform on Christmas-day, rather than to defer it till Easter. The king set the rest an example of compunction and devotion, laying aside his purple and crown, and covered with ashes, imploring night and day the divine mercy. To give an external pomp to this sacred action, in order to strike the senses of a barbarous people, and impress a sensible awe and respect upon their minds, the good queen took care that the streets from the palace to the great church should be adorned with rich hangings, and that the church and baptistery should be lighted up with a great number of perfumed wax tapers and scented with exquisite odours. The catechumens marched in procession, carrying crosses and singing the Litany. St Remigius conducted the king by the hand, followed by the queen and the people. Coming near the sacred font, the holy bishop, who had with great application softened the heart of this proud barbarian conqueror into sentiments of Christian meekness and humility, said to him, "Bow down your neck with meekness, great Sicambrian prince; adore what you have hitherto burnt, and burn what you have hitherto adored." Words which may be emphatically addressed to every penitent, to express the change of his heart and conduct, in renouncing the idols of his passions, and putting on the spirit of sincere Christian piety and humility. The king, after his baptism, bestowed many lands on St Remigius, who distributed them to several churches, as he did the donations of several others among the Franks, lest they should imagine he had attempted their conversion out of interest. He gave a considerable part to St Mary's Church, at Laon, where he had been brought up; and established Genebald, a nobleman skilled in profane and divine learning, first bishop of that see. He had married a niece of St Remigius, but was separated from her to devote himself to the practices of piety. Such was

the original of the bishopric of Laon, which before was part of the diocese of Rheims. St Remigius also constituted Theodore bishop of Tournay in 487; St Vedast, bishop of Arras in 498 and of Cambray in 510. He sent Antimund to preach the faith to the Morini, and to found the church of Terouenne. Clovis built churches in many places, conferred upon them great riches, and by an edict invited all his subjects to embrace the Christian faith. St Avitus, Bishop of Vienne, wrote to him a letter of congratulation upon his baptism, and exhorts him to send ambassadors to the remotest German nations beyond the Rhine, to solicit them to open their hearts to the faith.

When Clovis was preparing to march against Alaric in 506, St Remigius sent him a letter of advice how to govern his people so as to draw down upon himself the divine blessings.<sup>1</sup> "Choose," said he, "wise counsellors, who will be an honour to your name. Respect the clergy. Be the father and protector of your people; let it be your study to lighten as much as possible all the burdens which the necessities of the state may oblige them to bear; comfort and relieve the poor; feed the orphans; protect widows; suffer no extortion. Let the gate of your palace be open to all, that everyone may have recourse to you for justice; employ your great revenues in redeeming captives," &c. Clovis, after his victories over the Visigoths and the conquest of Toulouse, their capital in Gaul, sent a circular letter to all the bishops in his dominions, in which he allowed them to give liberty to any of the captives he had taken, but desired them only to make use of this privilege in favour of persons of whom they had some knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Under the protection of this great monarch, St Remigius wonderfully propagated the gospel of Christ by the conversion of a great part of the French nation; in which work God endowed him with an extraordinary gift of miracles, as we are assured not only by Hincmar, Flodoard, and all other historians who have mentioned him, but also by other incontestable monuments and authorities. Not to mention his Testament, in which mention is made of his miracles, the bishops who were assembled in the celebrated conference that was held at Lyons against the Arians in his time declared they were stirred up to exert their zeal in defence of the Catholic faith by the example of Remigius, "Who," say they,<sup>3</sup> "hath everywhere destroyed the altars of the idols by a multitude of miracles and signs." The chief among these prelates were Stephen, Bishop of Lyons, St Avitus of Vienne, his brother Apollinaris of Valence, and Eonius of Arles. They all went to wait upon Gondebald, the Arian King of the Burgundians, who was at Savigny, and entreated him to command his Arian bishops to hold a public conference with them. When he showed

<sup>1</sup> Conc. t. iv. p. 1402.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.; Du Chesne, Hist. Francor. Script. t. i. p. 836; and Append. Op. St Greg. Turon p. 1327.

<sup>3</sup> Conc. t. iv. p. 1318; Spicileg, t. v. p. 110.

much unwillingness they all prostrated themselves before him and wept bitterly. The king was sensibly affected at the sight, and, kindly raising them up, promised to give them an answer soon after. They went back to Lyons, and the king, returning thither the next day, told them their desire was granted. It was the eve of St Justus, and the Catholic bishops passed the whole night in the church of that saint in devout prayer; the next day, at the hour appointed by the king, they repaired to his palace and, before him and many of his senators, entered upon the disputation, St Avitus speaking for the Catholics and one Boniface for the Arians. The latter answered only by clamours and injurious language, treating the Catholics as worshippers of three Gods. The issue of a second meeting, some days after, was the same with that of the first; and many Arians were converted. Gondebald himself, some time after, acknowledged to St Avitus that he believed the Son and the Holy Ghost to be equal to the Father, and desired him to give him privately the unction of the holy chrism. St Avitus said to him, "Our Lord declares, 'Whoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father.' You are a king, and have no persecution to fear, as the apostles had. You fear a sedition among the people, but ought not to cherish such a weakness. God does not love him who, for an earthly kingdom, dares not confess him before the world."<sup>1</sup> The king knew not what to answer; but never had the courage to make a public profession of the Catholic faith. St Remigius by his zealous endeavours promoted the Catholic interest in Burgundy, and entirely crushed both idolatry and the Arian heresy in the French dominions. In a synod he converted, in his old age, an Arian bishop who came thither to dispute against him.<sup>2</sup> King Clovis died in 511. St Remigius survived him many years, and died in the joint reign of his four sons on the 13th of January, in the year 533, according to Rivet, and in the ninety-fourth year of his age, having been bishop above seventy years. The age before the irruption of the Franks had been of all others the most fruitful in great and learned men in Gaul; but studies were there at the lowest ebb from the time of St Remigius's death till they were revived in the reign of Charlemagne.<sup>3</sup> The body of this holy archbishop was buried in St Christopher's church at Rheims, and found incorrupt when it was taken up by Archbishop Hincmar in 852. Pope Leo IX, during a council which he held at Rheims in 1049, translated it into the Church of the Benedictin Abbey, which bears his name in that city, on the 1st of October, on which day, in memory of this and other translations, he appointed this festival to be celebrated, which, in Florus and other calendars, was before marked on the 13th of January. In 1646 this saint's body was again visited by the archbishop with many honourable

<sup>1</sup> St Greg. Tur. Hist. lib. ii. c. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Conc. t. iv. p. 1572, from Hincmar and Flodoard, c. 16.

<sup>3</sup> See Hist. Littérar. de la Fr. t. i., ii., iii.



witnesses, and found incorrupt and whole in all its parts; but the skin was dried and stuck to the winding-sheet, as it was described by Hincmar above eight hundred years before. It is now about twelve hundred years since his death.<sup>1</sup>

Care, watchings, and labours were sweet to this good pastor for the sake of souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus. Knowing what pains our Redeemer took, and how much he suffered for sinners, during the whole course of his mortal life, and how tenderly his divine heart is ever open to them, this faithful minister was never weary in preaching, exhorting, mourning, and praying for those that were committed to his charge. In imitation of the good shepherd and prince of pastors, he was always ready to lay down his life for their safety; he bore them all in his heart, and watched over them, always trembling lest any among them should perish, especially through his neglect: for he considered with what indefatigable rage the wolf watched continually to devour them. As all human endeavours are too weak to discover the wiles and repulse the assaults of the enemy without the divine light and strength, this succour he studied to obtain by humble supplications; and when he was not taken up in external service for his flock, he secretly poured forth his soul in devout prayer before God for himself and them.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 1 :*

ST BAVO, anchorite, a model of penance, patron of Ghent: ST FIDHARLEUS, of Ireland, Abbot of Raithin, died in 762: ST PIAT, apostle of Tournay, where he suffered tortures, finishing his heroic martyrdom at Seclin: ST REMIGIUS, the great apostle of the French nation, called by many in his lifetime a second St Paul: ST WASNULF, or WASNON, one of the many Scottish monks invited by St Vincent, Count of Haynault, to preach Christ in the Netherlands. THE FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY is kept on the first Sunday in October.

## OCTOBER 2

### THE FEAST OF THE HOLY ANGEL-GUARDIANS

AMONGST the adorable dispensations of the divine mercy in favour of men, it is not the least that he has been pleased to establish a communion of spiritual commerce between us on earth and his holy angels, whose companions we hope one day to be in the kingdom of his glory. This communion is entertained on our side by the religious veneration with which we honour them as God's faithful, holy, and glorious ministering spirits, and beg their charitable succour and intercession with God; on their side by their solicitude and prayers for us, and the many good offices they do us. The providence of God, always infinitely wise, infinitely holy, and infinitely gracious, vouchsafes to employ superior created beings in the execution of his will in various dispensations towards other inferior creatures. According to St Thomas, when he created the angels, he

<sup>1</sup> Gall. Chr. Nov. t. ix. p. 13, et 220.

enlightened the lowest amongst them by those that are supreme in those glorious orders of spirits. It is clear, in the holy scriptures, that those blessed spirits which we call angels (as much as to say God's messenger) receive this very name from their office, in being employed by him in frequently executing his commissions in our favour and defence. That he does this on many occasions, both general and particular, has been abundantly shown elsewhere from the testimony of the holy scriptures.<sup>1</sup> One of the most merciful appointments of God relating to this economy established by him between the blessed angels and men is, that he commissions chosen high spirits to be particular guardians to each of us. In this providence are displayed the infinite majesty, wisdom, and power of God, and the excess of his goodness towards his creatures; also a deep foundation is laid of the greatest charity and the highest mutual joy in each other between the angels and the elect for all eternity in their happy society of heaven.

That particular angels are appointed and commanded by God to guard and watch over each particular person among his servants, that is, all the just, or such as are in the state of grace, is an article of the Catholic faith, of which no ecclesiastical writer within the pale of the church, in any age, ever entertained the least doubt. That every man, even among sinners and infidels, has a guardian angel is the doctrine of the most eminent among the fathers, and so strongly supported by the most sacred authority, that it seems not to be called in question, especially as to all the faithful. The psalmist assures us,<sup>2</sup> "He hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." And in another place,<sup>3</sup> "The angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear him, and he shall deliver them." The patriarch Jacob prayed his good angel to bless his two grandsons, Ephraim and Manasses:<sup>4</sup> "The angel that delivereth me from all evils bless these boys." Judith said,<sup>5</sup> "His angel hath been my keeper, both going hence and abiding there, and returning from thence." Christ deters us from scandalizing any of his little ones, because their angels always behold the face of God, who, with zeal and indignation, will demand vengeance of God against any by whose malice precious souls, which were their wards, have perished.<sup>6</sup> So certain and general was the belief of a guardian angel being assigned to everyone by God, that when St Peter was miraculously delivered out of prison, the disciples who, upon his coming to them, could not at first believe it to be him, said, "It is his angel."<sup>7</sup> That St Michael was the protector of the Jewish nation, or of the people of God, and that countries or collective bodies of men have at least several, their tutelar angels, is clear from holy scripture.<sup>8</sup> So

<sup>1</sup> See the Festival of St Michael and all the Holy Angels, Sept. 29. Also Instruction Pastorale de M. Jean Joseph de la Bastiè, Evêque de St Malo, Sur les Saints Anges, ann. 1758.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xc. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xlviii. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Judith xiii. 20. See Exod. xxiii. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xviii. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Acts xi. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Dan. xi. 1; xii. 1. &c.

unanimous and so express is the doctrine of the fathers in asserting and illustrating this article of the Catholic faith concerning guardian angels that it would require a volume to copy their testimonies. The devils, with implacable envy and malice, study to compass our eternal ruin, both by stratagems and open assaults. God is pleased to oppose to their efforts his good angels, by making them our defenders. If Almighty God permits the devils various ways to assail and tempt us, and both by wiles and open violence to endeavour to draw us into eternal ruin, will he not allow his good angels to exert their zeal for his honour, and their charity for us? No sooner had Lucifer and his adherents set up the standard of their revolt from God, but St Michael and all the good angels entered upon a war against them, and, executing the sentence which God passed upon them, expelled them out of their blessed abodes. Man being created to fill up the places of these apostates, Lucifer, with his associates, is permitted by God to spread his snares and exert the efforts of his malice against us, that in these trials we may give proof of our fidelity, and may purchase, by victories and triumphs, that bliss for which we are created. Satan thus effects the ruin of innumerable souls, and the Holy Ghost gives us this warning: "The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath."<sup>1</sup>

The good angels, out of the same zeal with which they continue their war against these wicked spirits, come to our relief, according to the order established by divine providence. And God, out of his infinite tenderness and compassion for us, commands his highest spirits to watch over and to guard us. O my God! what is man that you should take such care of him, and give him for his governors the sublime princes of your heavenly court, the assistants of your throne! What am I but a worm of the earth, a slave to it, and to this body of filth, sin, and corruption? Must an angel, a creature so noble, so pure and holy, attend on me? "O wonderful condescension! O excess of goodness and love!" cries out St Bernard.<sup>2</sup> "He hath given his angels charge over thee."<sup>3</sup> Who is he that hath given this charge? To whom and of whom hath he given this order? And what is its import? Who is he that hath given this charge? The Lord of angels, whom they obey. The supreme majesty of God hath laid a command upon the angels, those sublime, those happy spirits, who approach so near his divine majesty, his own domestics; and it is the care of thee that by this sacred command he hath intrusted to them. What art thou? Is not man rottenness, corruption, and the pasture of worms? But what dost thou think he hath commanded them concerning thee? "That they guard thee; that they keep thee in all thy ways. Nor do they loiter; they even bear thee up in their hands, as it were, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Shall we not praise such a goodness?

A second motive or inducement which exceedingly endears us to

<sup>1</sup> Apoc. xii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Sermon. 12, in Ps. xc. p. 862.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xc. 11.

their protection is their compassion and charity for us. They consider that we are shortly to be their companions in eternal bliss; and are at present, by grace and the divine adoption, their brethren, their dear fellow-members in God, dear to him who is their God and our God, and precious in his sight, being purchased by him at the infinite price of his incarnation, passion, and death. They, on the other side, see the miseries of sin into which we are fallen, the dangers which surround us, and the infinite evils under which we groan. Their compassion is the more tender as their charity is the more perfect and more pure, and as they are seated nearer to the infinite source or fountain of charity. They see the snares which the devils lay to entrap us, and they remember the cause of God, and the sacred war in which they are engaged against those his enemies. "Therefore they watch over and guard us with great care and diligence, in all places and at all hours assisting us, providing for our necessities with solicitude; they intervene between us and thee, O Lord, conveying to thee our sighs and groans, and bringing down to us the desired blessing of thy graces."

St Bernard<sup>1</sup> observes that we owe to our guardian-angel "great reverence, devotion, and confidence: reverence," says he, "for his presence, devotion for his charity, and confidence in his watchfulness. Penetrated with awe, walk always with circumspection, remembering the presence of angels, to whom you are given in charge in all your ways. In every apartment, in every closet, in every corner, pay a respect to your angel. Dare you do before him what you durst not commit if I saw you?" In another place he thus urges the same motive:<sup>2</sup> "Consider with how great respect, awe, and modesty we ought to behave in the sight of the angels, lest we offend their holy eyes and render ourselves unworthy of their company. We must shun what grieves them, and practise that which gives them delight, as temperance, chastity, voluntary poverty, prayer with fervour, and tears. Above all things, the angels of peace expect in us unity and peace. Should not they be most delighted with that in us which represents the form of their own holy city, that they may admire a new Jerusalem, or heaven on earth? On the contrary, nothing so much provokes them as scandals and dissensions, if they discern any in us." St Basil enlarges upon the same argument to recommend to virgins the strictest modesty in all places. "Let the virgin, when she is alone," says he,<sup>3</sup> "fear and respect, first, herself and her own conscience; then her guardian-angel, who is always with her: 'Their angels always see the face of my Father.'<sup>4</sup> A man ought not to contemn the face of the angel to whose care his soul is intrusted, especially a virgin, whose paranymph he is appointed, and the guardian of her fidelity to her spouse. Above all, she must respect her spouse him-

<sup>1</sup> Serm. 12, in Ps. xc.

<sup>2</sup> Lip. de Verâ Virginit. n. 740.

<sup>3</sup> Serm. 1, in festo St Michael, n. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xviii. 10.

self, who is always with her, and together with him the Father and the Holy Ghost; not to mention the infinite multitudes of the angels and the blessed souls of the holy fathers; for though they are not visible to our carnal eyes, they behold us with their incorporeal sight. If the virgin fears the eye of others, much more must she the sight of these who are so holy and excellent, and so much greater than any men. She dreads particularly the eyes of the multitude; now, it being impossible she should escape the observation of this so great and holy a multitude, she will be careful never to do anything unbecoming her state."

We must not only respect, but gratefully and devoutly love and honour our tutelar spirit. He is a faithful guardian, a true friend, a watchful shepherd, and a powerful protector. He is a high spirit of heaven, and a courtier of the immortal king of glory; yet his tender charity, goodness, and compassion move him, through the divine appointment, to employ his whole power in guarding and defending us. He often protects our bodies, as the devils have sometimes power to hurt them. But what does not he do for our souls! He instructs, encourages, secretly exhorts, and reproves us; he defends us against our enemy, often discovers his stratagems, averts many dangers, and comforts and supports us in our trials and in the terrible hour of our death. He invisibly performs for us the offices which that angel who led the Jews into the promised land did for them, and which Raphael performed to the younger Toby in his journey to Rages: for he is our good and sure guide through the dangers of this life to eternal glory. What return shall we make by gratitude, confidence, respect, and obedience to this our faithful Raphael, our good angel! what praise and thanks do not we owe to God for so inestimable a benefit! Toby, reflecting on the great favours he had received from the angel Raphael, his faithful conductor, said to his father, "What shall we give him? or what can be worthy of his benefits? He conducted me, and brought me safe again; he received the money for me; he caused me to have my wife, and he chased from her the evil spirit; he gave joy to her parents; myself he delivered from being devoured by the fish; thee also he hath made to see the light of heaven, and we are filled with all good things through him. What can we give him sufficient for these things?"<sup>1</sup> That holy family, seeing the immense goodness and condescension of God in the benefits conferred upon them by his angel, "falling prostrate on their faces for three hours, blessed God."<sup>2</sup> Ought not we to imitate their gratitude? "In God," says St Bernard,<sup>3</sup> "let us affectionately love the angels, these glorious spirits which are to be one day our companions in glory and co-heirs, and are at present appointed our tutors and guardians by our Father."

We likewise ought to place a confidence in the protection of our good angel. To deserve his protection we must, above all things, fly sin. Even

<sup>1</sup> Tob. xii. 21.<sup>2</sup> Tob. xii. 22.<sup>3</sup> In Ps. xc.

venial sin troubles him. "As smoke chases away bees and stench doves, so the ordure of sin driveth away the angel, the keeper of life," says St Basil.<sup>1</sup> Impurity is a vice particularly abominable to holy spirits; and sins of scandal make the angels of the little ones whom we scandalize demand vengeance against us. God says, "Behold, I will send my angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared. But if thou wilt hear his voice, and do all that I shall speak, I will be an enemy to thy enemies, and will afflict them that afflict thee: and my angel shall go before thee, and shall bring thee into the place which I have prepared."<sup>2</sup>

### ST THOMAS, BISHOP OF HEREFORD, CONFESSOR

OUR island once saw the happy days when prayer and contemplation were the delight even of courts, the camp, and the shop; when Christian humility and true poverty of spirit sat on the thrones of kings, chastity flourished in palaces, and princes had no other interest of state but the glory of God, no other ambition than to dilate his kingdom, nor any greater happiness than to espouse their daughters to Christ crucified in the rigours of solitude and severe penance. The beauty of this holy vineyard in the church excited the envy of the devil, who, like a furious wild boar, sought to lay it waste. Tepidity in the divine service and sloth opened him the door; pride, ambition, luxury, and the love of the world and of pleasure soon gained ground, and miserably changed the face of this paradise. Wars, oppression, and desolation were the scourges by which God in his mercy sought to bring back an ungrateful people to their duty before he cast them off. He still raised up many holy pastors and patterns of virtue who laboured by word and example to stem the tide of iniquity. Amongst these shone most eminently St Thomas Cantelupe, sometime high-chancellor of England, and Bishop of Hereford. He was most nobly born, being eldest son to William Lord Cantelupe, one of the greatest generals that England ever produced. The mother of our saint was Melicenta, countess-dowager of Evreux and Gloucester, daughter of Hugh, Lord of Gournay, allied to the royal families of England and France. Thomas was born in Lancashire; his parents had three other sons and as many daughters, all younger than him, who were honourably married in the world. The father's office obliged him to reside chiefly at court to attend the king. When his son Thomas was capable of learning, he placed him under the care of his near kinsman, Walter Cantelupe, Bishop of Hereford, and afterwards under that of Robert Kilwarby, a learned Dominican, Archbishop of Canterbury, afterwards Cardinal and Bishop of Porto, and founder of the Black Friars in London. This experienced tutor found no obstacle or opposition to his instructions

<sup>1</sup> Hom. in Ps. xxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xxiii. 20, &c.

in the heart of his pupil, who, whilst a child, began daily to recite the breviary, besides hearing mass and other devotions, which he performed with wonderful fervour. He studied his philosophy at Paris; during which time he happened to take a prop of a vine out of another man's vineyard to hold up his window; of which action he conceived so great a remorse that he condemned himself for it to seven years' rigorous penance.

Thomas, resolving to consecrate himself to God in an ecclesiastical state, learned at Orleans the civil law, which is a necessary foundation to the canon law. He visited certain friends at the general council at Lyons, and there became acquainted with the most eminent pastors and theologians of the church, by whose conversation he much improved himself. Pope Innocent IV nominated him his chaplain; notwithstanding which he returned to England to pursue the study of the canon law. He proceeded doctor in laws at Oxford, and was soon after chosen chancellor of that famous university; in which office he shone in such a bright light that King Henry shortly after appointed him high-chancellor of the kingdom. His prudence, courage, indefatigable application, scrupulous justice, and abhorrence of human respects, or the least present which could be offered him, even in the most indirect manner, completed the character of an accomplished magistrate. The Earl of Gloucester, Roger Lord Clifford, Peter Corbet, and the king himself experienced his inflexibility. He procured the banishment of the obstinate Jews, because by their usuries, extortions, and counterfeit base coin they were a public nuisance to the state. St Thomas never ceased to solicit King Henry for leave to resign his office, but in vain. However, he obtained it of his son Edward I upon his accession to the throne; yet on condition that he should remain in his privy council; which he did till his death. The saint was then fifty-four years old; yet retired to Oxford, making books and his devotions his only pleasure. He took the degree of doctor of divinity in the church of the Dominicans, with whom he had studied, on which occasion Robert Kilwardby, his old friend and director, then Archbishop of Canterbury, did not fear endangering the saint's humility by declaring in his public oration, on the vesperial or eve of his promotion to the degree of doctor, that the candidate had lived without reproach and had never forfeited his baptismal innocence. In 1274 he was called by Pope Gregory X to the second general council of Lyons, assembled for the union of the Greeks, &c. In 1275 he was canonically chosen Bishop of Hereford by the chapter of that church and, all his opposition having been fruitless, consecrated in Christ Church, in Canterbury.

A sovereign contempt of the world made him relish the sweetness of holy retirement, in which, and in the functions of his ministry, he placed all his delight. He subdued his flesh with severe fasting, watching, and a rough hair shirt which he wore till his death, notwithstanding the colics

and other violent pains and sicknesses with which he was afflicted many years for the exercise of his patience. His zeal for the church seemed to have no bounds; and such was his charity, that he seemed born only for the relief of his neighbour, both spiritual and temporal. He defended the lands and privileges of his church with undaunted resolution, as appeared in his suits against Gilbert de Clare, the king's son-in-law, the powerful Earl of Gloucester, against Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, Roger, Lord Clifford, and his primate, John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury. That metropolitan had laid certain injunctions on the bishops subject to his jurisdiction which were an encroachment on their rights, but no historian has recorded in what they consisted. St Thomas, though threescore years of age, was pitched upon by his brethren to undertake a journey to Rome to lay their grievances before Pope Nicholas IV. The fame of his sanctity alone sufficed to procure him a most favourable reception. After a successful dispatch of his business, he made haste homewards, finding certain distempers with which he was afflicted to increase upon him. His sickness stopped him on his road at Montefiascone, in Tuscany. He received the last sacraments with incredible cheerfulness and devotion, and made the sufferings and death of his Redeemer the constant subject of his pious and fervent prayer, in which he calmly gave up the ghost, in the sixty-third year of his age, on the 25th of August, in 1282. He was buried six days after in the church of the monastery of St Severus, near Old Florence, and his funeral oration was spoken by a cardinal. His bones, separated from the flesh, were, with his head and heart, soon after carried to Hereford and enshrined with great honour in the chapel of our Lady, in his cathedral. In 1287 his remains at Hereford were translated with great pomp, in the presence of King Edward III, and laid in a marble tomb by the east wall of the north cross-aisle in the same cathedral. Innumerable manifest miracles were wrought through his merits, of which several authentic relations were recorded, some of which may be seen in Surius, others in Capgrave. In the original acts of his canonization, preserved in the Vatican library, is found an account of four hundred and twenty-nine miracles, approved by the bishops and others, deputed by his holiness's commissioners for that purpose, and by four public notaries. These brought on his canonization, which was performed by Pope John XXII in 1310, perhaps on the 2nd of October, on which day his principal festival was observed. The monument of St Thomas still remains in the cathedral at Hereford; but the inscription is torn off.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 2 :*

THE HOLY ANGEL-GUARDIANS, a comparatively recent feast, established in 1670: ST LEODEGARIUS, called in French ST LEGER, martyr, greatly revered in France for the holiness of his life and the constancy he showed in death, praying for his executioners to the last: ST THOMAS CANTELUPE, sometime High Chancellor of England and Bishop of Hereford; he was the son of one of the greatest English generals, William Lord Cantelupe, who by the overthrow of the barons and of the French fixed the crown on the head of Henry III; his feast is kept in the dioceses of England on October 3, but Butler gives it on this date.



OCTOBER 3

ST DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE, BISHOP OF ATHENS,  
MARTYR

[See Acts xvii. Tillemont, t. ii. Cave, p. 66.]

THE great apostle of the Gentiles, esteeming himself equally a debtor to the learned and to the unlearned, arrived at Athens about the year 51, seventeen years after our Lord's crucifixion, and boldly preached the faith in that city, which had been for many ages the chief seat of the muses, where the chief studies of philosophy, oratory, and polite literature flourished. All matters belonging to religion were, by an ancient law of that state, to be determined by the great council of Areopagites, which was still observed; for, though the Athenians were fallen under the Roman yoke, yet, out of regard to their learning and to the ancient dignity of their republic, the Romans restored to them many of their ancient privileges, with the name and title at least of their liberty. St Paul, therefore, was summoned to give an account of his doctrine in the Areopagus. St Paul explained before these learned senators the Christian maxims of repentance, purity of manners, the unity and omnipresence of God, his judgments, and the resurrection of the dead. The divine unction with which he delivered these great truths was an eloquence with which these masters of philosophy and oratory were unacquainted. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead shocked many and was a great stumbling-block, though Plato and other eminent philosophers among them had established many sublime sentiments with regard to the immortality of the soul and the rewards and punishments of a life to come; but that our flesh, which putrefies in the earth and perishes to all our senses, shall, by the power of God, be raised again the same that dies, was what many of these wise men of the world looked upon as a dream rather than a certain truth. Many, however, among them were exceedingly moved with the sanctity and sublimity of this new doctrine, and with the marks of a divine mission with which the preacher delivered himself; and they said to him they would hear him again upon that subject on some other day. Some whose hearts were touched by a powerful grace, and who with simplicity sought after the truth, not the idle gratification of curiosity, pride, or vanity, without delay addressed themselves to the apostle, and received from him full satisfaction of the evidence of the divine revelation which he preached to them. Among these there was a woman named Damaris; but the most remarkable among these converts was Dionysius, one of the honourable members or judges of this most venerable and illustrious senate. We are assured by the testimony of St Dionysius of Corinth<sup>1</sup> that St Dionysius the Areopagite was

<sup>1</sup> Ap. Eus. Hist. lib. iii. c. 4; lib. iv. c. 23.

afterwards constituted Bishop of Athens; and that this was done by St Paul himself we are informed by the Apostolical Constitutions, by Aristides cited by Usuard, and by several ancient martyrologists. Aristides, quoted by Usuard and St Sophronius of Jerusalem, styled him a martyr. The Greeks, in their menologies, tell us that he was burnt alive for the faith at Athens. His name occurs in ancient calendars on the 3rd of October. The cathedral of Soissons is in possession of his head, which was brought thither from Constantinople in 1205. Pope Innocent III sent to the abbey of St Denis, near Paris, the body of this saint, which had been translated from Greece to Rome.

We admire in this glorious saint, and other illustrious primitive converts, the wonderful change which faith produced in their souls. It not only enlightened their understandings, discovering to them new fields of the most sublime and important knowledge, and opening to their meditation the boundless range of eternity and of the infinite riches of the divine goodness, justice, and mercy; but it also exerted the most powerful influence upon their wills. A spirit of the most sincere compunction and humility was created in them, with a perfect contempt of the world and all earthly things, and an entire disengagement of their hearts from all inordinate attachment to creatures. The fire of pure and ardent charity was also kindled in their hearts, which consumed all the rust of their passions and purged their affections. Thus, by their conversion to the faith, they were interiorly changed, and became quite new men, endued with a temper truly heavenly and animated with the spirit of Christ. The light of faith spreads its beams upon our souls. Why then has it not produced the same reformation and change in our wills and affections? This it cannot do whilst we refuse to open our hearts to this grace, and earnestly set not ourselves to remove all obstacles of self-love and the passions. Yet, till this change be wrought in our affections, we are earthly, strangers to the spirit of Christ, and want the mark of meekness and charity by which those are to be known that belong to him.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 3 :*

ST DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE, who is said to have been named Bishop of Athens by St Paul and to have been burnt alive in that city : Two ST EWALDS, brothers, both priests who, for distinction and because of the colour of their hair, are called THE WHITE EWALD and THE BLACK EWALD ; the White Ewald was killed by barbarians, but the Black Ewald suffered many torments before his heroic death set him free : ST GERARD, Abbot, to whom the inspection and reformation of all the abbeys in Flanders was committed ; no fatigue could abate any of his austerities, nor did his employments seem to interrupt the continual sweet intercourse of his soul with God : and ST THERESA OF LISIEUX, " The Little Flower of Jesus," 1873-1897.

OCTOBER 4

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISIUM, CONFESSOR,  
FOUNDER OF THE FRIAR MINORS

(A.D. 1226)

[From his life wrote by St Bonaventure, with the notes of Sedulius and F. Wadding, a learned Irish Franciscan who flourished in Spain and Italy. See also F. Helyot, *Hist. des Ordres Relig.* t. vii. p. 1, and the life of this saint very well compiled and illustrated with accurate Dissertations by F. Candidus Chalippe, a French Recollect, in two volumes, 12mo, 1736. Suysken the Bollandist gives us a life of St Francis never before published, written in a great detail of circumstances by his disciple, Thomas de Celano, whom he had received into his Order. This life was compiled before that by St Bonaventure, and before the translation of the saint's body in 1230.]

THE blessed St Francis was one of those happy little ones whom God chose to enrich with spiritual knowledge and heavenly gifts of virtue. He was born at Assisium, in Umbriæ, in the Ecclesiastical State, in 1182. His father, Peter Bernardon, was descended of a gentleman's family originally settled at Florence, but was himself a merchant and lived at Assisium, a town situated on the brow of a hill called Assi. The saint's mother was called Pica. Both his parents were persons of great probity. They were in good circumstances, but so taken up with their business as to neglect giving their son any tincture of learning. Their trade lying in part with the French, they made him learn that language; and from the readiness with which he acquired and spoke it, he was called Francis, though the name of John had been given him at his baptism. In his youth he was too much led away with vain amusements, and was very intent on temporal gain; but he never let loose the reins of his sensual appetites, nor placed his confidence in worldly riches; and it was his custom never to refuse an alms to any poor man who asked it of him for the love of God. One day, being very busy about his affairs, he let a beggar go away without an alms; but, immediately reproaching himself with want of charity, ran after the poor man, gave him an alms, and bound himself by a vow never to refuse it to any poor man that should ask it for the love of God: this vow he kept to his death. Francis, whilst he yet lived in the world, was meek, patient, very tractable, and liberal to the poor beyond what his circumstances seemed to allow of. Whenever he heard the love of God named, he felt in his soul an interior spiritual jubilation. His patience under two accidents which befell him contributed greatly to the improvement of his virtue. The one was, that in a war between the cities of Perugia and Assisium he, with several others, was carried away prisoner by the Perugians. This affliction he suffered a whole year with great alacrity. The second was a long and dangerous sickness, which he suffered with great patience and piety. After his recovery, as he rode out one day in a new suit of clothes, meeting on the road a decayed gentleman then reduced to poverty, and very ill clad, he was touched with compassion to the quick, and changed

clothes with him. The night following he seemed to see in his sleep a magnificent palace, filled with rich arms, all marked with the sign of the cross; and he thought he heard one tell him that these arms belonged to him and his soldiers, if they would take up the cross and fight courageously under its banner. These interior motions awakened him, and inflamed him every day more and more to desire to attain to the perfect mortification of his senses and contempt of himself. Riding one day in the plains of Assisium he met a leper whose sores were so loathsome that at the sight of them he was struck with horror and suddenly recoiled; but overcoming himself he alighted, and as the leper stretched forth his hand to receive an alms, Francis, whilst he bestowed it, kissed his sores with great tenderness.

Resolving with fresh ardour to aim at Christian perfection, he had no relish but for solitude and prayer, and besought our Lord with great fervour to reveal to him his will. Being one day wholly absorbed in God, he seemed to behold Christ hanging upon his cross; from which vision he was so tenderly affected that he was never afterwards able to remember the sufferings of Christ without shedding many tears, and, from that time, he was animated with an extraordinary spirit of poverty, charity, and piety. He often visited the hospitals, served the sick, as if in them he had served Christ himself, and kissed the ulcers of the lepers with great affection and humility. He gave to the poor sometimes part of his clothes and sometimes money. He took a journey to Rome to visit the tombs of the apostles, and finding a multitude of poor before the door of St Peter's Church, he gave his clothes to one whom he thought to be most in need amongst them; and clothing himself with the rags of that poor man, he remained all that day in the company of those beggars, feeling an extraordinary comfort and joy in his soul. One day, as he was praying in the Church of St Damian, without the walls of Assisium, before a crucifix, he seemed to hear a voice coming from it, which said to him three times: "Francis, go and repair my house, which thou seest falling." The saint seeing that church was old and ready to fall to the ground, thought our Lord commanded him to repair it. He therefore went home, and by an action which was only justifiable by the simplicity of his heart, and the right of a partnership with his father in trade (for he was then twenty-five years old), took a horse-load of cloth out of his father's warehouse and sold it, with the horse, at Foligni, a town twelve miles from Assisium. The price he brought to the old poor priest of St Damian's, desiring to stay with him. The priest consented to his staying, but would not take the money, which Francis therefore laid in a window. His father, hearing what had been done, came in a rage to St Damian's, but was somewhat pacified upon recovering his money, which he found in the window. Francis, to shun his anger, had hid himself; but, after some days spent in prayer and fasting, appeared again in the streets, though so disfigured and ill clad that the



## SAINT FRANCISCUS D'ASSISI

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### (6) ST. FRANCISCUS D'ASSISI

Here Francis is wearing the coarse brown robe which was to be the habit of the great Franciscan Order which he founded. On his hands are the marks of the stigmata which he received while on the mountain of Alvernia. This gentle saint was the friend of all living things. He was the most humble of men and the gayest. Often as he walked along he would burst into praise of God or compose a ballad to his Lady Poverty.

people pelted him and called him madman; all which he bore with joy. Bernardon, more incensed than ever, carried him home, beat him unmercifully, put fetters on his feet, and locked him up in a chamber till his mother set him at liberty while his father was gone out. Francis returned to St Damian's, and his father following him thither insisted that he should either return home or renounce before the bishop all his share in his inheritance, and all manner of expectations from his family. The son accepted the latter condition with joy, and cheerfully went with his father before the Bishop of Assisium to make a legal renunciation to his inheritance in form. Being come into his presence, Francis, impatient of delays, while the instrument was drawing up, made the renunciation by the following action, carrying it in his fervour further than was required. He stripped himself of his clothes and gave them to his father, saying cheerfully and meekly, "Hitherto I have called you father on earth; but now I say with more confidence, Our Father, who art in heaven, in whom I place all my hope and treasure." He renounced the world with greater pleasure than others can receive its favours, hoping now to be freed from all that which is most apt to make a division in our hearts with God, or even to drive him quite out. The bishop admired his fervour, covered him with his cloak, and, shedding many tears, ordered some garment or other to be brought in for him. The cloak of a country labourer, a servant of the bishop, was found next at hand. The saint received this first alms with many thanks, made a cross on the garment with chalk or mortar and put it on. This happened in the twenty-fifth year of his age, in 1206.

Francis went out of the bishop's palace in search of some convenient retirement, singing the divine praises along the highways. He passed by a monastery and there received an alms as an unknown poor man. In the city of Gubbio, one who knew him took him into his house and gave him an entire suit of clothes, which were decent though poor and mean. These he wore two years, with a girdle and shoes, and he walked with a staff in his hand, like a hermit. At Gubbio he visited the hospital of lepers and served them, washing their feet and wiping and kissing their ulcers. For the repairs of the church of St Damian he gathered alms and begged in the city of Assisium, where all had known him rich. He bore with joy the railleries and contempt with which he was treated by his father, brother, and all his acquaintance; and if he found himself to blush upon receiving any confusion, he endeavoured to court and increase his disgrace, in order to humble himself the more, and to overcome all inclinations of pride in his heart. For the building of St Damian's he himself carried stones, and served the masons, and saw that church put in good repair. After this he retired to a little church, called Portiuncula, belonging to the abbey of Benedictin of monks Subiaco, who gave it that name because it was built on a small estate or parcel of land which belonged to them. It stands in

a spacious open plain, almost a mile from Assisium, and was at that time forsaken and in a very ruinous condition. The retiredness of this place was very agreeable to St Francis, and he was much delighted with the title which the church bore, it being dedicated in honour of our Lady of Angels; a circumstance very pleasing to him for his singular devotion to the holy angels and to the queen of angels. Francis repaired this church in 1207 in the same manner he had done the two others; he fixed his abode by it, made it the usual place of his devotions, and received in it many heavenly favours. He had spent here two years in sighs and tears when, hearing one day those words of Christ, "Do not carry gold, or silver, or a scrip for your journey, or two coats, or a staff,"<sup>1</sup> read in the gospel at mass, he desired of the priest after mass an exposition of them; and applying them literally to himself, he gave away his money, and leaving off his shoes, staff, and leathern girdle, contented himself with one poor coat, which he girt about him with a cord. This was the habit which he gave to his friars the year following. It was the dress of the poor shepherds and country peasants in those parts. The saint added a short cloak over the shoulders, and a capuche to cover the head. St Bonaventure, in 1260, made this capuche, or mozetta, a little longer, to cover the breast and shoulders. Some of the very habits which the saint wore are still shown at Assisium, Florence, and other places. In this attire he exhorted the people to penance with such energy that his words pierced the hearts of his hearers. Before his discourses he saluted the people with these words, "Our Lord give you peace"; which he sometimes said he had learned by divine revelation. They express the salutation which Christ and St Paul used. God had already favoured the saint with the gifts of prophecy and miracles. When he was begging alms to repair the church of St Damian, he used to say, "Assist me to finish this building. Here will one day be a monastery of holy virgins, by whose good fame our Lord will be glorified over the whole church." This was verified in St Clare five years after, who inserted this prophecy in her last will and testament.<sup>2</sup> Before this, a man in the duchy of Spoleto was afflicted with a horrible running cancer, which had gnawn both his mouth and cheeks in a hideous manner. Having, without receiving any benefit, had recourse to all remedies that could be suggested, and made several pilgrimages to Rome for the recovery of his health, he came to St Francis, and would have thrown himself at his feet; but the saint prevented him, and kissed his ulcerous sore, which was instantly healed. "I know not," says St Bonaventure, "which I ought most to admire, such a kiss or such a cure." The sufferings of our Divine Redeemer were a principal object of our saint's devotions, and in his assiduous meditation on them he was not able to contain the torrents of his tears. A stranger passing by the Portiuncula heard his sighs, and, stepping in, was astonished to see the abundance of tears in which he

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 10.<sup>2</sup> Extant in Wadding, ad an. 1253.

found him bathed, for which he reproached him as for a silly weakness. The saint answered, "I weep for the sufferings of my Lord Jesus Christ. I ought not to blush to weep publicly over the whole earth at the remembrance of this wonderful mystery."

Many began to admire the heroic and uniform virtue of this great servant of God, and some desired to be his companions and disciples. The first of these was Bernard of Quintaval, a rich tradesman of Assisium, a person of singular prudence and of great authority in that city, which had been long directed by his counsels. Seeing the extraordinary conduct of St Francis, he invited him to sup at his house, and had a good bed made ready for him near his own. When Bernard seemed to be fallen asleep, the servant of God arose, and falling on his knees, with his eyes lifted up and his arms across, repeated very slow, with abundance of tears, the whole night, *Deus meus et Omnia*, "My God and my All." Bernard secretly watched the saint all night by the light of a lamp, saying to himself, "This man is truly a servant of God." After many other proofs of the sincere and admirable sanctity of Francis, being charmed and vanquished by his example, he begged the saint to make him his companion. Francis recommended the matter to God for some time; they both heard mass together, and took advice that they might learn the will of God. The design being approved, Bernard sold all his effects and divided the sum among the poor in one day. Peter of Catana, a canon of the cathedral of Assisium, desired to be admitted with him. The saint gave his habit to them both together on the 16th of August 1209, which is called the foundation of this Order, though some date it a year sooner, when the saint himself, upon hearing the gospel read, embraced this manner of life. The third person who joined them was Giles, a person of great simplicity and virtue. They first joined St Francis in his cell at the Portiuncula; the two first soon after he had changed his habit; upon which he went to Rome and obtained a verbal approbation of his Order from Innocent IV in the same year, 1209, a little before Otho IV was crowned emperor at Rome, about the close of September. The saint at his return settled at Rivo-Torto, near Assisium, where he inhabited, with his disciples, an abandoned cottage. After an excursion into the marquisate of Ancona to preach penance, he brought back his disciples to the Portiuncula. When their number was augmented to one hundred and twenty-seven, St Francis, assembling them together, spoke to them in a most pathetic manner of the kingdom of God, the contempt of the world, the renouncing their own will, and the mortification of their senses.

The saint composed a rule for his Order, consisting of the gospel counsels of perfection, to which he added some things necessary for uniformity in their manner of life. He exhorts his brethren to manual labour, but will have them content to receive for it things necessary for



life, not money. He bids them not to be ashamed to beg alms, remembering the poverty of Christ; and he forbids them to preach in any place without the bishop's licence. He carried his rule to Rome, to obtain the pope's approbation. Innocent III, who then sat in St Peter's chair, appeared at first averse, and many of the cardinals alleged that the Orders already established ought to be reformed, but their number not multiplied; and that the intended poverty of this new institute was impracticable. Cardinal Colonna, Bishop of Salina, pleaded in its favour that it was no more than the evangelical counsels of perfection. The pope consulted for some time, and had the affair recommended to God. He afterwards told his nephew, from whom St Bonaventure heard it, that in a dream he saw a palm-tree growing up at his feet; in another vision, some time after, he saw St Francis propping up the Lateran church, which seemed ready to fall; as he saw St Dominic, in another vision, five years after. He therefore sent again for St Francis, and approved his rule, but only by word of mouth, in 1210, and he ordained him deacon.

St Francis having obtained of his holiness an oral approbation of his institute, left Rome with his twelve disciples, and returned with them, first to the valley of Spoleto, and thence to Assisium, where they lived together in a little cottage at Rivo-Torto, without the gates of the town; and they sometimes went into the country to preach. Soon after, the Benedictins of Monte Soubazo bestowed on the founder the church of the Portiuncula, upon condition that it should always continue the head church of his Order. The saint refused to accept the property or dominion, but would only have the use of the place; and, in token that he held it of the monks, he sent them every year as an acknowledgment a basket of little fish called *laschi*, of which there is great plenty in a neighbouring river. The monks always sent the friars, in return, a barrel of oil. St Francis would not suffer any dominion or property of temporal goods to be vested even in his Order, or in any community or convent in it (as in other religious Orders), that he might more perfectly and more affectionately say in his heart that the house in which he lived, the bread which he ate, and the poor clothes which he wore, were none of his; and that he possessed nothing of any earthly goods, being a disciple of Him who, for our sakes, was born a stranger in an open stable, lived without a place of his own wherein to lay his head, subsisting by the charity of good people, and died naked on a cross in the close embraces of holy poverty, in order to expiate our sins, and to cure our passions of covetousness, sensuality, pride, and ambition. This spirit and love of holy poverty our saint learned by assiduous humble meditation on the life and passion of Christ, the great book of a spiritual life; and this is the poverty which he assiduously and most earnestly recommended to his followers. When they one day asked him which of all virtues is the most agreeable to God he answered, "Poverty is the way to salvation, the

nurse of humility, and the root of perfection. Its fruits are hidden, but they multiply themselves infinite ways." He speaks of the spirit of poverty as the root of humility and divine charity, in the same sense that some others speak of humble obedience, inasmuch as both spring from and reciprocally entertain a sincere and cordial affection of humility. St Francis called the spirit of holy poverty the foundation of his Order, and in his habit, in everything that he used, and in all his actions, he carried his affection for it to the greatest nicety. Returning once from a journey to the Portiuncula, he found a new building made there which he judged to be too neat and commodious. He therefore insisted that it should be demolished; till the citizens of Assisium declared that they had built it for the lodgings of strangers, who must otherwise lie in the fields, and that it was no way intended for his Order. In his rule he prescribed that the churches of his religious should be low and small, and all their other buildings of wood; but some persons representing to him that in certain countries wood is dearer than stone, he struck out this last condition, requiring only that all their buildings should be suitable to that strict poverty which they professed.

Holy poverty was dearer to St Francis through his extraordinary love of penance. He scarce allowed his body what was necessary to sustain life, and found out every day new ways of afflicting and mortifying it. If any part of his rough habit seemed too soft, he sewed it with packthread, and was wont to say to his brethren that the devil easily tempted those that wore soft garments. His bed was ordinarily the ground, or he slept sitting, and used for his bolster a piece of wood or a stone. Unless he was sick, he very rarely ate anything that was dressed with fire; and when he did, he usually put ashes or water upon it. Often his nourishment was only a little coarse bread, on which he sometimes strewed ashes. He drank clear water, and that very moderately, how great thirst or heat soever he suffered. He fasted rigorously eight lents in the year. Seculars were much edified that, to conform himself to them, he allowed his religious to eat flesh meat, which the end of his institute made necessary. He called his body brother Ass, because it was to carry burdens, to be beaten, and to eat little and coarsely. When he saw anyone idle, eating of other men's labours, he called him brother Fly, because he did no good, but spoiled the good which others did, and was troublesome to them. As a man owes a discreet charity to his own body, the saint, a few days before he died, asked pardon of his for having treated it perhaps with too great rigour, excusing himself that he had done it the better to secure and guard the purity of his soul, and for the greater service of God. Indiscreet or excessive austerities always displeased him. When a brother, by immoderate abstinence, was not able to sleep, the saint brought him some bread and, that he might eat it with less confusion, began himself to eat with him.

The care with which he watched over himself to preserve the virtue

of purity ought not to be passed over. In the beginning of his conversion, finding himself assailed with violent temptations of concupiscence, he often cast himself into ditches full of snow. Once, under a more grievous assault than ordinary, he presently began to discipline himself sharply; then, with great fervour of spirit, he went out of his cell and rolled himself in the snow.

With extreme austerity, St Francis joined the most profound humility of heart. He was in his own eyes the basest and most despicable of all men, and desired to be reputed such by all; he loved contempt, and sincerely shunned honour and praise. If others commended him, and showed any esteem of his virtue, he often said to himself, "What everyone is in the eyes of God, that he is, and no more." He frequently commanded some friar to revile him with reproachful language. Thus he once repeated, "O brother Francis, for thy sins thou hast deserved to be plunged into hell"; and ordered brother Leo as often to reply, "It is true, you have deserved to be buried in the very bottom of hell." When he was not able to avoid the esteem of others, he was overwhelmed with secret confusion. "I refer honours and praises," said he once to another, "entirely to God, to whom they are due. I take no share in them, but behold myself in the filth of my own baseness and nothingness, and sink lower and lower in it. Statues of wood or stone take nothing to themselves, and are insensible to the respect and honour which is given them, not at all on their own account, but for the sake of those whom they represent. And if men honour God in his creatures, even in me, the last and vilest among them, I consider him alone." A certain holy friar and companion of St Francis was favoured with a vision at prayer, in which he saw a bright throne prepared in heaven, and heard a voice telling him that it was for the humble Francis. After having received this vision, he asked the saint how he could with truth think and call himself the greatest sinner in the world? To which the saint answered, "If God had bestowed on the greatest sinner the favours he has done me, he would have been more grateful than I am; and if he had left me to myself, I should have committed greater wickedness than all other sinners." From this humility it was that he would not be ordained priest, but always remained in the degree of deacon; he bore the greatest reverence to all priests. An effect of the same humility was his extreme love of obedience, and his often asking counsel of his lowest subjects, though he had the gift of prophecy, and was endued with an extraordinary heavenly discretion and light. In his journeys from place to place he used to promise obedience to the brother whom he took with him for his companion. He said once, that among the many favours God had done him, one was, that he would as willingly and as diligently obey a novice who had lived but one hour in a religious state (if he was set over him by his warden or guardian) as he would the most ancient and discreet among the fathers, because a subject is not to regard the person whom he obeys, but

God, whose place every superior holds with regard to us. Being asked how one that is truly obedient ought to behave, he said he ought to be like a dead body. He was a great enemy to all singularity. In a certain convent of his Order, he was told that one of the friars was a man of admirable virtue, and so great a lover of silence that he would only confess his faults by signs. The saint did not like it, and said, "This is not the spirit of God, but of the devil; a foul temptation, not a divine virtue." It afterwards appeared, by the misconduct of this poor religious man, by how deceitful a singularity he separated himself from the conversation of his brethren. Like instances happened on other occasions. The saint's extreme aversion to the least shadow of dissimulation or hypocrisy appeared in his whole conduct.

This saint, who by humility and self-denial was perfectly crucified and dead to himself, seemed by the ardour of his charity to be rather a seraph incarnate than a frail man in a mortal state. Hence he seemed to live by prayer, and was assiduously employed in holy contemplation; for he that loves much desires to converse with the person whom he loves; in this he places his treasure and his happiness, and finds no entertainment or delight like that of dwelling upon his excellences and greatness. St Francis retired every year, after the feast of the Epiphany, in honour of the forty days which Christ spent in the desert, and, shutting himself up in his cell, he spent all that time in rigorous fasting and devout prayer. He communicated very often, and ordinarily with ecstasies, in which his soul was wrapt and suspended in God. He recited the canonical hours with great devotion and reverence, always standing with his head bare, and usually with his eyes bathed in tears, never leaning upon anything, even when he was very weak and sick. When he travelled he always stopped at the canonical hours of prayer for the sake of greater recollection and attention; and he used to say that if the body, when it eats corruptible food, desires to be at rest, why should not this be granted the soul when it takes heavenly sustenance. For his trial God once abandoned him to a violent desolation of soul and spiritual dryness during two months, till, by assiduous prayer, he suddenly found himself again replenished with the delights of the Holy Ghost and his sensible presence. Though he felt a wonderful tenderness of devotion to all the mysteries of the life of our Saviour, yet he was most affected, next to those of his sacred passion, with that of his holy nativity, by reason of the poverty, cold, and nakedness in which the divine infant made his appearance in the stable and crib at Bethlehem. One Christmas night the saint having sung the gospel at mass, preaching to the people on the nativity of the poor King, he was not able to satiate the tender affection of his heart by repeating often, with incredible sweetness, his holy name under the appellation of the Little Babe of Bethlehem. He never spoke or heard mention made of the holy mystery of the Incarnation without feeling the most tender affection of devotion. He was particularly

affected with those words, "The Word was made flesh." He had a singular devotion to the Mother of God (whom he chose for the special patroness of his Order), and in her honour he fasted from the feast of SS. Peter and Paul to that of her Assumption. After this festival he fasted forty days, and prayed much, out of devotion to the angels, especially the archangel Michael; and at All Saints he fasted other forty days. According to the measure of his great affection and tenderness for God, he was favoured by him with the abundance of his spiritual comforts and graces. Many times being in prayer he fell into raptures; often on the road, as he travelled, he was visited by our Lord with a ravishing inexpressible sweetness with which his soul was quite overwhelmed; and he usually made those that went with him to go before, both for the sake of closer recollection and to conceal the visits and favours of the Lord. He moreover gave him the spirit of prophecy; for St Francis foretold many things which happened a long time after. He was endowed with an extraordinary gift of tears. His eyes seemed two fountains of tears, which were almost continually falling from them, insomuch that at length he almost lost his sight. When physicians advised him to repress his tears, for otherwise he would be quite blind, the saint answered, "Brother physician, the spirit has not received the benefit of light for the flesh, but the flesh for the spirit; we ought not, for the love of that sight which is common to us and flies, to put an impediment to spiritual sight and celestial comfort." When the physician prescribed that, in order to drain off the humours by an issue, he should be burnt with a hot iron, the saint was very well pleased, because it was a painful operation and a wholesome remedy. When the surgeon was about to apply the searing-iron, the saint spoke to the fire, saying, "Brother Fire, I beseech thee to burn me gently, that I may be able to endure thee." He was seared very deep, from the ear to the eyebrow, but seemed to feel no pain at all.

Whatever he did, or wherever he was, his soul was always raised to heaven, and he seemed continually to dwell with the angels. He consulted God before everything he did, and he taught his brethren to set a high value upon, and by humility, self-denial, and assiduous recollection, to endeavour to obtain the most perfect spirit of prayer, which is the source of all spiritual blessings, and without which a soul can do very little good. The practice of mental prayer was the favourite exercise which he strongly recommended. Persons who laboured under any interior weight of sadness, or spiritual dryness, he vehemently exhorted to have recourse to fervent prayer, and to keep themselves as much as possible in the presence of their heavenly Father, till he should restore to them the joy of salvation. Otherwise, said he, a disposition of sadness, which comes from Babylon, that is, from the world, will gain ground, and produce a great rust in the affections of the soul, whilst she neglects to cleanse them by tears, or a spiritual desire

of them. After extraordinary visits of the Holy Ghost, the saint taught men to say, "It is you, O Lord, who by your gracious goodness have vouchsafed to give this consolation to me, a sinner, most unworthy of your mercy. To you I commend this favour, that you preserve its fruit in my heart; for I tremble lest, by my wretchedness, I should rob you of your own gift and treasure." He was accustomed to recite our Lord's prayer very slowly, with singular gust in each petition and in every word. The doxology, "Glory be to the Father," &c., was a beloved aspiration of this saint, who would repeat it often together at work, and at other times, with extraordinary devotion, and he advised others to use the same. A certain lay-brother once asking leave to study, the saint said to him, "Repeat assiduously the doxology, 'Glory be to the Father, &c.' and you will become very learned in the eyes of God." The brother readily obeyed, and became a very spiritual man. St Francis sometimes cried out in the fervour of his love, "Grant, O Lord, that the sweet violence of thy most ardent love may disengage and separate me from everything that is under heaven, and entirely consume me, that I may die for the love of thy infinite love. This I beg by thyself, O Son of God, who diedst for love of me. My God, and my All! who art thou, O sweetest Lord? and who am I? thy servant, and a base worm. I desire to love thee, most holy Lord. I have consecrated to thee my soul and my body, with all that I am. Did I know what to do more perfectly to glorify Thee, this I would most ardently do. Yes: this I most ardently desire to accomplish, O my God." St Francis sometimes expressed his pious breathings in canticles. Two such canticles composed by him are still extant, and express, with wonderful strength and sublimity of thought, the vehemence and tenderness of divine love in his breast, in which he found no other comfort than, could it be gratified, to die of love, that he might be for ever united to the great object of his love. His thirst of the conversion of souls was most ardent. He prayed and wept continually for the conversion of sinners, with extraordinary fervour, and recommended to his religious to do the same, saying that many sinners are converted and saved by the prayers and tears of others; and that even simple laymen, who do not preach, ought not to neglect employing this means of obtaining the divine mercy in favour of infidels and sinners. So great was the compassion and charity of this holy man for all such that, not contenting himself with all that he did and suffered for that end in Italy, he resolved to go to preach to the Mahometans and other infidels, with an extreme desire of laying down his life for our Lord. With this view he embarked, in the sixth year after his conversion, for Syria, but straight there arose a tempest, which drove him upon the coast of Dalmatia; and finding no convenience to pass on further, he was forced to return back again to Ancona. Afterwards, in 1214, he set out for Morocco to preach to the famous Mahometan king Miramolin, and

went on his way with so great fervour and desire of martyrdom that, though he was very weak and much spent, his companion was not able to hold pace with him. But it pleased God that in Spain he was detained by a grievous fit of sickness, and afterwards by important business of his Order, and various accidents, so that he could not possibly go into Mauritania. But he wrought several miracles in Spain, and founded there some convents; after which he returned through Languedoc into Italy.

It will be related below how, in the thirteenth year after his conversion, he passed into Syria and Egypt. In the meantime, upon motives of the same zeal, he laboured strenuously to advance the glory of God among Christians, especially in his own Order. St Francis, preaching penance to all the world, used often to repeat the following words with inimitable fervour and energy: "My love is crucified," meaning that Christ is crucified, and we ought to crucify our flesh. The holy founder out of humility gave to his Order the name of Friars Minors, desiring that his brethren should be disposed, in the affection of sincere humility, to strive, not for the first, but for the last and lowest places. Many cities became suitors that they might be so happy as to possess some of his disciples animated with his spirit, and St Francis founded convents at Cortona, Arezzo, Vergoreta, Pisa, Bologna, Florence, and other places; and in less than three years his Order was multiplied to sixty monasteries. In 1212 he gave his habit to St Clare, who, under his direction, founded the institute of holy virgins, which was called the second Order of St Francis. He took upon himself the care of her monastery at St Damian's, in Assisium, but would never consent that his friars should serve any other nunnery of this or any other Order, in which resolution he persisted to his death; though Cardinal Hugolin, the protector of his Order, was not so scrupulous in that particular. The founder carried his precaution and severity so far, in imitation of many ancient saints, the better to secure in his religious a perfect purity of heart, which a defect in any small circumstance may sometimes tarnish. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the holy founder, several houses of the Poor Clares found means to procure, through powerful mediations, directors out of this Order to be allowed them, especially after the death of St Francis. St Dominic, being at Rome in 1215, met there St Francis, and these two eminent servants of God honoured each other, had frequent spiritual conferences together, and cemented a close friendship between their Orders, which they desired to render perpetual, as we are informed by contemporary writers of the life of St Dominic. Some say that St Dominic assisted at St Francis's chapter of Matts, and some others; but this is not supported by ancient vouchers, and is denied by the most judicious Dominican historians.

Ten years after the first institution of his Order, in 1219, St Francis held near Portiuncula the famous general chapter called of Matts, because

it was assembled in booths in the fields, being too numerous to be received in any building of the country. We are assured by four companions of St Francis and by St Bonaventure that five thousand friars met there, though some remained at home who could not leave their convents. In this chapter several of the brethren prayed St Francis to obtain for them of the pope a licence to preach everywhere without the leave of the bishops of each diocese. The saint, shocked at the proposal, answered, "What, my brethren! do not you know the will of God? It is that by our humility and respect we gain the superiors, that we may by words and example draw the people to God. When the bishops see that you live holily, and attempt nothing against their authority, they will themselves entreat you to labour for the salvation of the souls committed to their charge. Let it be your singular privilege to have no privilege which may puff up the hearts of any with pride, or raise contests and quarrels."

The Orders of St Francis and St Dominic had been approved by word of mouth by Innocent III, who died in 1219, having sat eighteen years. Honorius III, who succeeded him, confirmed that of St Dominic by two bulls, dated the 22nd of December 1216. St Francis obtained of this pope an approbation of his missions; and in 1219 set sail with B. Illuminatus, of Reate, and other companions, from Ancona, and, having touched at Cyprus, landed at Acon or Ptolemais, in Palestine. The Christian army in the sixth crusade lay at that time before Damietta, in Egypt, and the Soldan of Damascus, or Syria, led a numerous army to the assistance of Meledin, Soldan of Egypt, or Babylon; for so he was more commonly called, because he resided at Babylon, in Egypt, a city on the Nile, opposite to the ruins of Memphis. Grand Cairo rose out of the ashes of this Babylon. St Francis, with brother Illuminatus, hastened to the Christian army, and upon his arrival endeavoured to dissuade them from giving the enemy battle; foretelling their defeat, as we are assured by three of his companions; also by St Bonaventure,<sup>1</sup> Cardinal James of Vitri, who was then present in the army,<sup>2</sup> and Marin Sanut.<sup>3</sup> He was not heard, and the Christians were driven back into their trenches with the loss of six thousand men. However, they continued the siege and took the city on the 5th of November the same year. In the meantime St Francis, burning with zeal for the conversion of the Saracens, desired to pass to their camp, fearing no dangers for Christ. He was seized by the scouts of the infidels, to whom he cried out, "I am a Christian; conduct me to your master." Being brought before the soldan, and asked by him his errand, he said with wonderful intrepidity and fervour, "I am sent, not by men, but the most high God, to show you and your people the way of salvation, by announcing to you the truth of the gospel." The soldan appeared to be moved, and invited

<sup>1</sup> St Bonav. Vit. St Fra. c. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Jac. Vitri. Hist. Occid. c. 37, et Ep. ad Lothar.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. Sanut. Secret. fidel. Cruc. lib. iii. par. 1, c. 7, 8.



him to stay with him. The man of God replied, "If you and your people will listen to the word of God, I will with joy stay with you. If yet you waver between Christ and Mahomet, cause a great fire to be kindled, and I will go into it with your Imams (or priests) that you may see which is the true faith." The soldan answered that he did not believe any of their priests would be willing to go into the fire, or to suffer torments for their religion, and that he could not accept his condition for fear of a sedition. He offered him many presents, which the saint refused. After some days, the soldan, apprehending lest some should be converted by his discourse and desert to the Christians, sent him, escorted by a strong guard, to their camp before Damiata, saying to him privately, "Pray for me, that God may make known to me the true religion and conduct me to it."

St Francis returned by Palestine into Italy, where he heard with joy that the five missionaries whom he had sent to preach to the Moors had been crowned with martyrdom in Morocco.<sup>1</sup> But he had the affliction to find that Elias, whom he had left vicar-general of his Order, had introduced several novelties and mitigations, and wore himself a habit of finer stuff than the rest, with a longer capuche, or hood, and longer sleeves. St Francis called such innovators bastard children of his Order, and deposed Elias from his office. Resigning the generalship that year, 1220, he caused the virtuous Peter of Cortona to be chosen minister-general, and after his death, in 1221, Elias to be restored. But Peter, and after him Elias, out of respect for the saint, were only styled vicars-general till his death, who by the sole weight of his authority continued always to direct the government of his Order so long as he lived. In 1223 he obtained of Pope Honorius III the confirmation of the famous indulgence granted a little time before to the church Portiuncula. His Order, as has been mentioned, was verbally approved by Innocent III in 1210; a like approbation was given it in 1215 by the fourth Lateran council, to which St Francis repaired for that purpose. The founder, therefore, revised his rule, which breathed throughout the most profound humility and an entire renunciation of the world, and presented it to Pope Honorius III, who confirmed it by a bull dated the 29th of November 1223.

When St Francis returned from Spain and laid aside the thoughts of his intended mission to Morocco in 1215, Count Orlando, of Catona, bestowed on him a close agreeable solitude on Mount Alverno, a part of the Apennines not very far from Camaldoli and Vale Umbrosa. This virtuous count built there a convent and a church for the Friar Minors, and St Francis was much delighted with the retirement of that high mountain. The raptures and other extraordinary favours which he received from God in contemplation he was careful to conceal from men. St Bonaventure and other writers of his life assure us that he was frequently

<sup>1</sup> See January 16.

raised from the ground at prayer. F. Leo, his secretary and confessor, testified that he had seen him in prayer sometimes raised above the ground so high that this disciple could only touch his feet, which he held and watered with his tears; and that sometimes he saw him raised much higher.<sup>1</sup> Towards the festival of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, 1224, St Francis retired into a most secret place in Mount Alverno, where his companions made him a little cell. He kept Leo with him, but forbade any other person to come to him before the feast of St Michael; it was then the Lent which he kept before the feast of that archangel, and he desired to devote himself in it entirely to the delights of heavenly contemplation. Heavenly visions and communications of the Holy Ghost were familiar to our saint; but in this retreat on Mount Alverno, in 1224, he was favoured with extraordinary raptures, and inflamed with burning desires of heaven in a new and unusual manner. Then it was that this saint deserved, by his humility and his ardent love of his crucified Saviour, to be honoured with the extraordinary favour of the marks of his five wounds imprinted on his body by the vision of a seraph.

About the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, on the 15th day of September, Francis being in prayer on the side of the mountain, raised himself towards God with the seraphic ardour of his desires, and was transported by a tender and affective compassion of charity into Him, who, out of love, was crucified for us. In this state he saw, as it were, a seraph, with six shining wings blazing with fire, bearing down from the highest part of the heavens towards him with a most rapid flight, and placing himself in the air near the saint. There appeared between his wings the figure of a man crucified, with his hands and feet stretched out, and fastened to the cross. The wings of the seraph were so placed that two he stretched above his head, two others he extended to fly, and with the other two he covered his whole body. At this sight, Francis was extremely surprised; a sudden joy mingled with sorrow filled his heart. The familiar presence of his Lord under the figure of a seraph, who fixed on him his eyes in the most gracious and tender manner, gave him an excessive joy; but the sorrowful sight of his crucifixion pierced his soul with a sword of compassion. At the same time he understood by an interior light that, though the state of crucifixion no way agreed with that of the immortality of the seraph, this wonderful vision was manifested to him that he might understand he was not to be transformed into a resemblance with Jesus Christ crucified by the martyrdom of the flesh, but in his heart and by the fire of his love. After a secret and intimate conversation, the vision disappearing, his soul remained interiorly inflamed with a seraphic ardour, and his body appeared exteriorly to have received the image of the crucifix, as if his flesh, like soft wax, had received the mark of a seal impressed upon it.

<sup>1</sup> See the lives of St Phillip Neri, St Teresa, &c.; also Chalippe in that of St Francis.

For the marks of nails began to appear in his hands and feet, resembling those he had seen in the vision of the man crucified. His hands and feet seemed bored through in the middle with four wounds, and these holes appeared to be pierced with nails of hard flesh; the heads were round and black, and were seen in the palms of his hands, and in his feet in the upper part of the instep. The points were long and appeared beyond the skin on the other side, and were turned back as if they had been clenched with a hammer. There was also in his right side a red wound, as if made by the piercing of a lance; and this often threw out blood, which stained the tunic and drawers of the saint. This relation is taken from St Bonaventure, who calls the wound of the side a scar; but means not a scar covered, but a wound left visible and open; for he calls it a wound, and a hole in his side; and such he again describes it as seen after the saint's death. The circumstance of its often bleeding confirms the same; which does not agree to a wound that is healed and covered, or to a callous scar raised after the healing of a wound, as Baillet, with many other mistakes, pretends this to have been.<sup>1</sup> This wonderful miracle was performed whilst the saint's understanding was filled with the strongest ideas of Christ crucified, and his love employed in the utmost strength of his will in entertaining its affections on that great object, and assimilating them to his beloved in that suffering state; so that in the imaginative faculty of his soul he seemed to form a second crucifix, with which impression it acted upon and strongly affected the body. To produce the exterior marks of the wounds in the flesh, which the interior love of his burning heart was not able to do, the fiery seraph, or rather Christ himself, in that vision (by darting bright piercing rays from his wound represented in the vision) really formed them exteriorly in him, which love had interiorly imprinted in his soul, as St Francis of Sales explains it.<sup>2</sup>

St Francis endeavoured nothing more than to conceal this singular favour of heaven from the eyes of men; and for this purpose he ever after covered his hands with his habit, and wore shoes and the feet of stockings on his feet; yet, having first asked the advice of brother Illuminatus and others, by their counsel he, with fear, disclosed to them this wonderful vision, but added that several things had been manifested to him in it which he never would discover to any one—secrets, says St Bonaventure, which perhaps could not be expressed by words, or which men, who are not supernaturally enlightened, are not capable of understanding. Notwithstanding the precautions of the saint, these miraculous wounds were seen by several during the two years which he survived, from 1224 to 1226, and by great multitudes after his death. The account of them the vicar-general of his Order published in a circular letter, addressed to all his brethren immediately after St Francis's death, the original copy of which

<sup>1</sup> See F. Chalippe, t. ii. p. 351.

<sup>2</sup> St Francis of Sales on the love of God.

was seen by Wadding. Luke of Tuy, bishop of that city in Spain, published his work against the Albigenses in 1231, in which<sup>1</sup> he tells us that he went to Assisium the year after the saint's death, and that this vision was attested to him by many religious men and seculars, clergymen and laymen, who had seen these nails of flesh in the saint's hands and feet, and the wound in his side, and with their hands had felt them; he infers from them that Christ was fastened on the cross with four nails, and that it was his right side which was opened with the lance. He confirms this wonderful miracle from the life of the saint, written by F. Thomas de Celano, a disciple and companion of the saint, by the order of Pope Gregory IX,<sup>2</sup> from which work St Bonaventure took his relation. Pope Alexander IV, in a sermon to the people in 1254, declared that he had been himself an eye-witness of those wounds in the body of the saint whilst he was yet living. St Bonaventure, who with other friars was present at this discourse, heard this authentic declaration made by his holiness. That pope assures the same in a bull in 1255, addressed to the whole church.<sup>3</sup> St Bonaventure, who wrote his life in 1261, and who had lived long with the most familiar disciples of the servant of God, says that whilst the saint was alive many of his brethren and several cardinals saw the marks of the nails in his hands and feet; some also, by secret artifices, found the means to see and feel the wound in his side. After his death, everyone openly saw it and the other four wounds. Fifty friars, St Clare and all her sisters, and an innumerable multitude of seculars, saw and kissed them; and some, for greater certainty, touched them with their hands.

It appears manifest that this wonderful favour was in part a recompense of the great love which St Francis bore to the cross of Christ. It was to render himself more perfectly conformed to his crucified Jesus that he with great fervour stripped himself of everything, made of his body a victim of penance, and thrice sought an opportunity of giving his life for Christ by martyrdom. This adorable object was all his science, all his glory, all his joy, all his comfort in this world. To soothe the sharp pains of a violent distemper, he was one day desired to let someone read a book to him; but he answered, "Nothing gives me so much delight as to think on the life and passion of our Lord; I continually employ my mind on this object, and were I to live to the end of the world I should stand in need of no other books." In the school of his crucified Lord he learned so vehement a love of holy poverty, that meeting one day a beggar almost naked, he with sighs said to his companion, "Here is a poor man whose condition is a reproach to us. We have chosen poverty to be our riches; yet in it he outdoes us." He called poverty his lady, his queen, his mother, and his spouse, and earnestly begged it of God as his portion and privilege.

<sup>1</sup> Luc. Tud. adv. Albig. lib. ii. c. 11, Bibl. Patr. t. xv.

<sup>2</sup> Greg. IX, Constit. 12. <sup>3</sup> Alex. IV, Constit. 4.

"O Jesus," said he, "who was pleased to embrace extreme poverty, the grace I beg of you is that you bestow on me the privilege of poverty. This I ask for me and mine, that for the glory of thy holy name we never possess anything under heaven, and receive our subsistence itself from the charity of others, and be in this also very sparing and moderate." He extended his rule of poverty to what is interior and spiritual, fearing lest any one among his friars should regard his science as his own property and fund, for so it feeds self-love, and produces inordinate complacency in itself, and secret attachments, very contrary to that entire disengagement of the heart which opens it to the divine grace. The saint indeed exhorted those that were best qualified to apply themselves to sacred studies; but always with this caution, that they still spent more time in prayer, and studied not so much how to speak to others as how to preach to themselves, and how to practise virtue.

St Francis came down from Mount Alverno bearing in his flesh the marks of the sacred wounds, and more inflamed than ever with the seraphic ardours of divine charity. The two years that he survived his heavenly vision seemed a martyrdom of love. He was, moreover, much afflicted in them with sickness, weakness, and pains in his eyes. In this suffering state he used often to repeat that the most rigorous appointments of Providence are often the most tender effects of the divine mercy in our favour. In 1225, his distemper growing dangerous, Cardinal Hugolin and the Vicar-general Elias obliged him to put himself in the hands of the most able surgeons and physicians of Rieti, wherein he complied with great simplicity. In his sickness he scarce allowed himself any intermission from prayer, and would not check his tears, though the physician thought it necessary for the preservation of his sight, which he entirely lost upon his death-bed. Under violent pains, when another exhorted him to beg of God to mitigate them, notwithstanding his extreme weakness he arose and, falling on the ground and kissing it, prayed as follows: "O Lord, I return thee thanks for the pains which I suffer; I pray that thou add to them a hundred times more, if such be thy holy will. I shall rejoice that thou art pleased to afflict me without sparing my carcass here; for what sweeter comfort can I have than that thy holy will be done!" He foretold his death long before it happened, both to several of his brethren and in a letter which he dictated on Sunday, the 28th of September, to a pious lady of Rome, his great friend. St Francis, a little before his death, dictated his testament to his religious brethren, in which he recommends to them that they always honour the priests and pastors of the church as their masters, that they faithfully observe their rule, and that they work with their hands, not out of a desire of gain, but for the sake of good example, and to avoid idleness. "If we receive nothing for our work," says he, "let us have recourse to the table of the Lord, the begging alms from door to

door." He orders that they who do not know how to work learn some trade. Pope Nicholas III declared that this precept of manual labour does not regard those who are in holy orders, and are employed in preaching, and in other spiritual functions, which is clear from the rule itself, the example of St Francis, and the apology wrote by St Bonaventure. Having finished his testament, the saint desired a spiritual song of thanksgiving to God for all his creatures, which he had composed, to be sung. Then he insisted upon being laid on the ground and covered with an old habit, which the guardian gave him. In this posture he exhorted his brethren to the love of God, holy poverty, and patience, and gave his last blessing to all his disciples—the absent as well as those that were present, in the following words: "Farewell, my children; remain always in the fear of the Lord. That temptation and tribulation which is to come is now at hand; and happy shall they be who shall persevere in the good they have begun. I hasten to go to our Lord, to whose grace I recommend you." He then caused the history of the passion of our Lord in the gospel of St John to be read; after which he began to recite the hundred and forty-first psalm: "I have cried with my voice to the Lord," &c. Having repeated the last verse: "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the just wait for me till thou reward me"; he yielded up his soul on the 4th of October, in the year 1226, the twentieth after his conversion and the forty-fifth of his age, as De Calano assures us. The next morning, which was Sunday, the saint's body was carried with a numerous and pompous procession from the convent of the Portiuncula to Assisium. The procession stopped at St Damian's, where St Clare and her nuns had the comfort of kissing the marks of the wounds in his flesh. St Clare attempted to take out one of the nails from the flesh but could not, though the black head was protuberant above the palm of the hand, and she easily thrust it up and down, and dipped a linen cloth in the blood which issued out. The body was carried thence and buried at St George's. Pope Honorius III dying in 1227, Cardinal Hugolin was chosen pope the same year, and took the name of Gregory IX. Two years after the saint's death this pope went to Assisium, and after a rigorous examination and solemn approbation of several miraculous cures wrought through the merits of St Francis, he performed the ceremony of his canonization in the Church of St George, on the 6th of July, 1228, and commanded his office to be kept in 1229. His holiness gave a sum of money for building a new church on the place, which he would have called from that time Colle del Paradiso. Elias, the general, by contributions and exactions, much increased the sum, and raised a most magnificent pile, which was finished in 1230, and that year the body of the saint was translated thither on the 25th of May. The body of the saint still lies in this church. In the sacristy, among many other relics, was shown, in 1745, some of the writings of St Francis and

also of St Bonaventure. Over this church is a second, adorned with rich paintings, dedicated in honour of the twelve apostles. We are told there is a third subterraneous church under it, like that under St Peter's on the Vatican-hill, made in vaults; but that of St Francis is not open. The body of St Francis has never been discovered or visited since the time of Gregory IX, and was concealed in some secret vault for the better securing so precious a treasure. In this patriarchal convent the general of the Conventual Franciscans resides.

Who can consider the wonderful examples of St Francis, and not cry out with our divine Redeemer, "I confess to thee, eternal Father, Lord, and King of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them to the little ones. Thus it is, O Father, because it is pleasing in thy eyes."<sup>1</sup> Thou resistest the proud, and hast dismissed them empty; but thou givest grace to the humble, taking pleasure to communicate thyself to those that are simple of heart, thy little ones, whose hearts are disengaged from earthly things. Thou art truly a hidden God, who dwellest in inaccessible light, unknown to the world; but thou impartest thyself abundantly and lovingly to those who, having purified their souls from the spots of earthly filth and attachments, express and show forth, in their hearts and bodies, Jesus Christ crucified. Yes, Father, so it hath pleased Thee.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 4 :*

ST AMMON, hermit, founder of the Hermitages of Nitria: ST AUREA, Abbess, who walked before her three hundred nuns in the exercise of religious perfection for thirty-three years; one hundred and sixty of her sisters were carried off with her by a pestilence: ST EDWIN, King, who was baptized in the eleventh year of his reign over the English and the Britons; killed in battle in 633, after he had governed his people with wisdom and justice for seventeen years: ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI, founder of the Friars Minors: ST MARCUS, ST MARCIAN (said to have been brothers), AND THEIR COMPANIONS, martyrs, killed in a frightful slaughter of Christians in Egypt in 304 or 305; some of these noble souls were persons eminent for their birth, learning, or skill in philosophy: THE MARTYRS OF TRIERS, "an incredible number," who suffered under the Arian Emperor, Constantius.

## OCTOBER 5

### ST PLACIDUS, ABBOT, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

(A.D. 546)

[From St Greg. Dial. lib. ii. c. 3, 7, and Mabillon, Annal. Bened. t. i., who shows the several acts of their martyrdom to be pieces of no authority, with all the instruments relative; which is confirmed at large by Bue the Bollandist, § 3 and 4.]

THE reputation of the great sanctity of St Benedict, whilst he lived at Subiaco, being spread abroad, the noblest families in Rome brought their children to him to be educated by him in his monastery. Equitus committed to his care, in 522, his son Maurus, then twelve years of age, and the patrician Tertullus his son Placidus, who was no more than seven.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi. 25.

St Gregory relates that Placidus being fallen into the lake of Subiaco as he was fetching some water in a pitcher, St Benedict, who was in the monastery, immediately knew this accident and, calling Maurus, said to him, "Brother, run, make haste; the child is fallen into the water." Maurus, having begged his blessing, ran to the lake and walked upon the water, above a bow-shot from the land to the place where Placidus was floating, and taking hold of him by the hair, returned with the same speed. Being got to the land and looking behind him, he saw he had walked upon the water, which he had not perceived till then. St Benedict ascribed this miracle to the disciple's obedience; but St Maurus attributed it to the command and blessing of the abbot, maintaining that he could not work a miracle without knowing it. Placidus decided the dispute by saying, "When I was taken out of the water, I saw the abbot's melotes upon my head, and himself helping me out." The melotes was a sheep's skin worn by monks upon their shoulders. We must observe that St Placidus, being very young, had not yet received the monastic tonsure and habit. This miraculous corporeal preservation of Placidus may be regarded as an emblem of the wonderful invisible preservation of his soul by divine grace from the spiritual shipwreck of sin. He advanced daily in holy wisdom and in the perfect exercise of all virtues, so that his life seemed a true copy of that of his master and guide, the glorious St Benedict; who, seeing the great progress which divine grace made in his tender heart, always loved him as one of the dearest among his spiritual children, and took him with him to Mount Cassino in 528. The senator Tertullus, principal founder of this monastery, made them a visit soon after their arrival there, saw with pleasure the rising virtue of his son Placidus, and bestowed on St Benedict part of the estates which he possessed in that country, and others in Sicily. The holy patriarch founded another monastery upon these latter near Messina, a great city with a fine harbour, upon the straits which part Italy from Sicily. Of this new colony St Placidus was made abbot. St Placidus is supposed to have gone to Sicily in 541, a little before the holy patriarch's death, being about twenty-six years of age. He there founded a monastery at Messina. The spirit of the monastic state being that of penance and holy retirement, the primitive founders of this holy institute were particularly watchful entirely to shut the world out of their monasteries, and to guard all the avenues through which it could break in upon their solitude. This spirit St Placidus had learned from his great instructor, and the same he instilled into his religious brethren. He had not lived many years in Sicily before a pagan barbarian, with a fleet of pirates from Africa rather than from Spain, then occupied by Arian Goths, not by pagans, landed in Sicily, and out of hatred of the Christian name and the religious profession of these servants of God, put St Placidus and his fellow-monks to the sword, and burnt their monastery, about the year 546.



All true monks devote themselves to God; they separate themselves from the world, and do not entangle themselves in secular business, that they may more easily seek perfectly and with their whole hearts, not those things which are upon earth, but those which are in heaven. This is the duty of every Christian, as Origen elegantly observes,<sup>1</sup> and as St Paul himself teaches,<sup>2</sup> according to the divine lessons of our blessed Redeemer. For to be dead to the world, and to live to Christ, is the part of all who are truly his disciples. Those who live in the world must so behave as not to be of the world. They must be assiduously conversant in prayer and other exercises of religion. Their work itself must be sanctified and dedicated to God by the like motives with which the ancient monks applied themselves to penitential manual labour or to external spiritual functions.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 5 :*

ST GALLA, widow; being married very young, she lost her husband during the first year, made over the revenues of her great estate to be the patrimony of the poor, and gave herself up to a life of prayer and suffering : ST PLACIDUS, ST EUTYCHIUS, and thirty other martyrs; Placidus, as a young monk, was loved by St Benedict as one of the dearest of his spiritual children; put to death with his companion-martyrs by pirates, about the year 546.

OCTOBER 6

## ST BRUNO, CONFESSOR, FOUNDER OF THE CARTHUSIAN MONKS

(A.D. 1101)

[From the short chronicle of the first four priors of the Chartreuse, compiled by Guigo, the fifth prior; from the larger chronicle called *Chronica de exordia Ordinis Carthusiensis*, containing the history of the first five priors, written about the year 1250, according to F. Bye; from St Bruno's life by Fr. du Puitz or Puteanus, general of the Order, in 1508; from his life compiled by Guibert of Nogent in 1101, and the life of St Hugh of Grenoble, written by Guy, the fifth general of the Carthusians.]

ST BRUNO was descended of an ancient and honourable family, and born at Cologne, not after the middle of the eleventh century, as some mistake, but about the year 1030, as the sequel of his life demonstrates. In his infancy he seemed above the usual weaknesses of that age, and nothing childish ever appeared in his manners. His religious parents, hoping to secure his virtue by a good education, placed him very young in the college of the clergy of St Cunibert's Church, where he gave extraordinary proofs of his piety, capacity, and learning, insomuch that St Anno, then Bishop of Cologne, preferred him to a canonry in that church. He was yet young when he left Cologne and went to Rheims for his greater improvement in his studies, moved probably by the reputation of the school kept by the clergy of that church. Bruno was received by them with great marks of distinction. He took in the whole circle of the sciences, was a good poet for that age, but excelled chiefly in philosophy and theology, so that these

<sup>1</sup> Origen, Hom. 11, in Levit.

<sup>2</sup> Col. iii. 2.

titles of poet, philosopher, and divine were given him by contemporary writers by way of eminence, and he was regarded as a great master and model of the schools. The historians of that age speak still with greater admiration of his singular piety.<sup>1</sup> Heriman, canon and scholasticus of Rheims, resigning his dignities and renouncing the world to make the study of true wisdom his whole occupation, Gervasius, who was made Archbishop of Rheims in 1056, made Bruno scholasticus, to which dignity then belonged the direction of the studies and all the great schools of the diocese. The prudence and extraordinary learning of the saint shone with great lustre in this station; in all his lessons and precepts he had chiefly in view to conduct men to God, and to make them know and respect his holy law. Such was his reputation that he was looked upon as the light of churches, doctor of doctors, the glory of the two nations of Germany and France, the ornament of the age, the model of good men, and the mirror of the world, to use the expressions of an ancient writer. He taught a considerable time in the church of Rheims; and is said, by the author of his life, to have been a long time the support of that great diocese; by which expression he seems to have borne the weight of the spiritual government under the Archbishop Gervasius. That prelate dying in 1067, Manasses I by open simony got possession of that metropolitical church, and oppressed it with most tyrannical vexations and enormities. Bruno retained under him his authority and dignities, particularly that of chancellor of the diocese, in which office he signed with him the charter of the foundations of St Martin aux Jumeaux, and some other deeds of donations to monasteries. Yet he vigorously opposed his criminal projects. Hugh of Die, the pope's legate, summoned Manasses to appear at a council which he held at Autun in 1077, and upon his refusing to obey the summons, declared him suspended from his functions. St Bruno, Manasses the provost, and Poncius, a canon of Rheims, accused him in this council; in which affair our saint behaved with so much prudence and piety that the legate, writing to the pope, exceedingly extolled his virtue and wisdom, styling him the most worthy doctor of the church of Rheims,<sup>2</sup> and recommending him to his holiness as one excellently qualified to give him good counsel, and to assist him in the churches of France in promoting the cause of God. The simoniacal usurper, exasperated against the three canons who appeared in the council against him, caused their houses to be broken open and plundered, and sold their prebends. The persecuted canons took refuge in the castle of the Count of Rouci, and remained there till August 1078, as appears by a letter which the simoniacal archbishop at that time wrote against them to the pope.

Before this time St Bruno had concerted the project of his retreat, of which he gives himself the following account in his letter to Raoul, or

<sup>1</sup> Rob. Altiss. Chron. p. 77. &c.

<sup>2</sup> Conc. t. x. p. 365, and Hugo Flaviac. in Chron. p. 199.

Ralph, provost of Rheims, to which dignity he was raised in 1077 upon the resignation of Manasses. St Bruno, this Ralph, and another canon of Rheims, named Fulcius, in a conversation which they had one day together in one Adam's garden, discoursed on the vanity and false pleasures of the world, and on the joys of eternal life, and being strongly affected with their serious reflections, promised one another to forsake the world. They deferred the execution of this engagement till Fulcius should return from Rome, whither he was going; and he being detained there, Ralph slackened in his resolution, and continuing at Rheims, was afterwards made archbishop of that see. But Bruno persevered in his resolution of embracing a state of religious retirement. He resigned his benefice, quitted his friends, and renounced whatever held him in the world, and persuaded some of his friends to accompany him into solitude. After some time he went to Cologne, his native country; and, some time after, was called back to his canonry at Rheims; but making there a very short stay, he repaired to Saisse-Fontaine, in the diocese of Langres, where he lived some time with some of his scholars and companions. Two of these, named Peter and Lambert, built there a church, which was afterwards united to the abbey of Molesme.

In this solitude Bruno, with an earnest desire of aiming at true perfection in virtue, considered with himself, and deliberated with his companions, what it was best for him to do, spending his time in the exercises of holy solitude, penance, and prayer. He addressed himself for advice to St Robert, abbot of Molesme, who exhorted him to apply to Hugh, Bishop of Grenoble, who was truly a servant of God, and a person better qualified than any other to assist him in his design.<sup>1</sup> St Bruno followed this direction, being informed that in the diocese of Grenoble there were woods, rocks, and deserts most suitable to his desires of finding perfect solitude, and that this holy prelate would certainly favour his design. Six of those who had accompanied him in his retreat attended him on this occasion, namely, Landwin, who afterwards succeeded him in the office of prior of the great Chartreuse; Stephen of Bourg, and Stephen of Die, both canons of St Rufus in Dauphiné; Hugh, whom they called the chaplain, because he was the only priest among them; and two laymen, Andrew and Guerin. St Bruno and these six companions arrived at Grenoble about midsummer, 1084, and cast themselves at the feet of St Hugh, begging of him some place in his diocese where they might serve God remote from worldly affairs and without being burdensome to men. The holy prelate, understanding their errand, rejoiced exceedingly, and received them with open arms, not doubting but these seven strangers were represented to him in a vision he had the night before in his sleep; wherein he thought he saw God himself building a church in the desert

<sup>1</sup> See Mabill. *Annal. lib.* lxvi. n. 66, and Martenne *Nova Collectio Mon.* t. vi. pr. n. 30.

of his diocese, called the Chartreuse, and seven stars rising from the ground and forming a circle, which went before him to that place, as it were, to show him the way to the church. He assigned them that desert of Chartreuse for their retreat, promising his utmost assistance to establish them there; but, to the end they might be armed against the difficulties they would meet with, he represented to them the dismal situation of that solitude, beset with very high craggy rocks, almost all the year covered with snow and thick fogs, which rendered them not habitable. St Hugh, having kept them some days in his palace, conducted them to this place, and made over to them all the right he had in that forest; and, some time after, Siguin, abbot of Chaise-Dieu, in Auvergne, who was joint lord of the same. Bruno and his companions immediately built an oratory there, and very small cells, at a little distance one from the other, like the ancient Lauras of Palestine. Such was the original of the Order of the Carthusians, which took its name from this desert of Chartreuse. Some have dated its institution in 1086, others in 1085; but it is clearly proved by Mabillon<sup>1</sup> that St Bruno retired to this wilderness in June 1084. St Hugh, by a charter dated in the month following, forbade any woman to go into their lands, or any person to fish, hunt, or drive cattle that way. They first built a church on a summit, and cells near it, in which they lived two together in each cell, soon after single, meeting in church at matins and vespers: other hours, prime, tierce, sext, none, and compline, they recited in their cells. They never took two refectons in a day, except on the greatest festivals, on which they ate together in a refectory. On other days they ate in their cells as hermits.

It is hard to represent the wonderful life of these holy anchorites in their desert. Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluni, fifty years after St Bruno, writes of them: "Their dress is meaner and poorer than that of other monks; so short and scanty, and so rough, that the very sight affrights one. They wear coarse hair shirts next their skin, fast almost perpetually; eat only bran bread; never touch flesh, either sick or well; never buy fish, but eat it if given them as an alms; eat eggs and cheese on Sundays and Thursdays; on Tuesdays and Saturdays their fare is pulse or herbs boiled; on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays they take nothing but bread and water; and they have only one meal a day, except within the octaves of Christmas, Easter, Whitsuntide, Epiphany, and some other festivals. Their constant occupation is praying, reading, and manual labour, which consists chiefly in transcribing books. They say the lesser hours of the divine office in their cells at the times when the bell rings; but meet together at vespers and matins with wonderful recollection. They say mass only on Sundays and festivals." This manner of life they followed without any written rule; though Mabillon thinks they conformed to that

<sup>1</sup> Act. Ben. t. ix. pr. n. 86.

of St Benedict in most points which were compatible with their plan of an heremital life. This institute has been regarded by the pastors of the church as the most perfect model of a penitential and contemplative state, in which persons devote themselves to the most perfect sanctification of their souls, and by their tears and prayers endeavour to draw down the divine mercy on sinners and on the whole world.

St Bruno is styled by the writers of that age Master of the Chartreuse, and sometimes prior; for, being the person who led the rest into that course of life, he was looked upon by them as their superior; and as he was the most learned, so he also excelled them in the fervour of his charity, compunction, and humility. St Hugh, who at first received him as his child, became so great an admirer of his virtue that he took him for his father and spiritual director; and without regard to the difficulty of the ways, he often went from Grenoble to the Chartreuse to enjoy the heavenly conversation of St Bruno, and improve himself by his advice and example. That holy prelate felt an inexpressible joy in his heart as often as he heard any new novice had joined these true disciples of the cross; a joy which was often renewed in him; for their example awaked many from their spiritual lethargy in the world, and persons of all ages, even young boys, ran to the desert to take up the cross of Christ in their company.

St Bruno had not governed this congregation six years when Pope Urban II, who had formerly been his scholar at Rheims, being informed of the holy life which he led, and being, from his own personal acquaintance, fully convinced of his great prudence and learning, sent him a severe order to repair to Rome, that he might assist him by his counsels in the government of the church. The humble monk could have scarce met with a more severe trial of his obedience, or made a greater sacrifice. Nevertheless, without further deliberation, he set out in 1089, having nominated Landuin prior at the Chartreuse. The pope himself, at the same time, had recommended that house to the protection of Siguin, abbot of Chaise Dieu. The departure of the saint was an inexpressible grief to his disciples. The saint endeavoured in vain to comfort them, promising them he would do whatever lay in him to return to them as soon as possible. Several of them protested they would never be parted from him, and these he took with him to Rome. St Bruno was received by the pope with all imaginable tokens of esteem and affection. His holiness kept him in his palace, near his person, and consulted him in all weighty affairs of religion and conscience. By his order also, the saint's companions had an apartment assigned them in the city, where they endeavoured to live as they had done in the desert; but they soon found it was not so easy a matter there to devote themselves wholly to their holy meditations, pious reading, singing psalms, and fervent prayer, in which consisted all their satisfaction. They complained to St Bruno that they found not in the city what they sought.

The saint ardently desired to conduct them back to the mountain of the Chartreuse; but not being able to obtain that leave for himself, he prevailed that they might return to the desert.

The tumult of a court grew every day more insupportable to St Bruno, who had tasted the sweets of solitude and uninterrupted contemplation, and trembled amidst the distractions of the world. The pope had too great a value for such a friend to grant his request of returning to the Chartreuse; he even pressed him to accept the archbishopric of Rheggio, in Calabria; but the holy man excused himself with so great earnestness, and redoubled his importunities for the liberty of living to himself in solitude, that his holiness at length thought he could no longer offer violence to his holy inclinations, and consented that he might retire into some wilderness in the mountains of Calabria. The saint found a convenient solitude in the diocese of Squillaci, where he settled in 1090, with some new disciples whom he had gained in Rome. Here he betook himself to the exercises of a solitary life with more joy and fervour than ever. Remembering the engagement which his ancient friend Ralph, the provost of Rheims, had made to embrace a solitary life, he wrote him from this desert an elegant and tender letter, inviting him to his hermitage, putting him in mind of his promise and the obligation he had taken upon himself, and giving him an agreeable and cheerful description of his desert, and of uninterrupted scenes of pure joy and delights which he and his companions found in it. From the turn of this letter it sufficiently appears how far the saint was from the least disposition of melancholy, moroseness, or harsh severity.

The principal works of St Bruno are Comments on the Psalter and on St Paul's Epistles, both of which are demonstrated to be the genuine productions of our saint, and answer the character given of St Bruno, that he was one of the most learned men, not only of the age in which he lived, but of most others. He understood both the Hebrew and Greek languages, and was versed in the writings of the fathers, especially those of St Ambrose and St Austin. He is a strenuous advocate for the doctrine of St Austin with regard to the mysteries of divine grace. In his Exposition of the Psalms he clears the literal sense, but always refers it to the spiritual, applying everything to Christ and his church, as the sense principally meant by the Holy Ghost. The elegy in fourteen verses, On the Contempt of the World, or on the last things, which was composed by St Bruno, is engraved under the picture of the saint in the choir of the famous Chartreuse of Dijon. Several other comments on the scripture, and other writings, have been ascribed to this saint, but belong some to St Bruno, Bishop of Segni, others to St Bruno, Bishop of Wurtzbourg, who both flourished in the same age.

St Bruno, being settled in his désert in the diocese of Squillaci, had no

thoughts but of living unknown to men; but, as retired as he was, he had not been long in this new hermitage when Roger, sovereign Count of Sicily and Calabria, discovered him one day as he was hunting in that wood. The prince, having conversed with him, was so much moved by his virtue that he was extremely desirous to testify his esteem for him by some remarkable favours; but a love of poverty and a spirit of disinterestedness would not permit the holy man to take advantage of his generosity in accepting any rich presents. The monastery De la Torre, in Calabria, was the second of the Order. St Bruno established in it the most perfect spirit of humility, contempt of the world, retirement, and mortification, and continued by his counsels and instructions at a distance to direct the monks of the Great Chartreuse in all spiritual and temporal emergencies. The time being come when God had decreed to reward the labours of his servant, he visited him with a sickness about the latter end of September 1101. When the holy man perceived his death to draw near, he gathered his monks about his bed, and in their presence made, as it were, a public confession of his life; then made a profession of his faith, which his disciples copied from his mouth and preserved. It is very clear and explicit on the mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation, and in condemning the heresy of Berengarius, which had lately raised great troubles in the church. The holy man thus expressed his faith of the sacrament of the altar, "I believe the sacraments which the church believeth, and in particular that the bread and wine consecrated on the altar are the true body of our Lord Jesus Christ; his true flesh and his true blood, which we receive for the remission of our sins, and in the hope of eternal life."<sup>1</sup> He had more fully explained this doctrine of the church against Berengarius in his comments on St Paul.<sup>2</sup> He resigned his soul to God on Sunday, the 6th of October 1101. An account of his death was sent by his monks of La Torre in an encyclical letter to all the neighbouring churches and monasteries, according to the custom, to recommend the souls of persons deceased to their prayers. Near two hundred answers to this letter are extant, and contain the highest eulogiums of his extraordinary virtue, wisdom, and learning.<sup>3</sup> St Bruno was interred in the cemetery of the church of the blessed Virgin de Torre. Pope Leo X had granted in the preceding year an office in his honour to his Order; which is called an equipollent beatification, his eminent sanctity and many miracles after his death not standing in need of the formalities of a scrutiny. In 1623 Gregory XV, by an equipollent canonization, extended his office to the whole church.

The motto of St Bruno are these words of the Psalmist:<sup>4</sup> "My eyes prevented the watches: I was troubled, and I spoke not. I had in my mind the eternal years. Lo! I have gone far off, flying away, and I abode in

<sup>1</sup> Ap. Mabill. Analect. t. iv. p. 400.

<sup>2</sup> In 1 Cor. xi. pp. 305, 306.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxvi. 6.

<sup>4</sup> In 1 Cor. xi. pp. 305, 306.

the wilderness.”<sup>1</sup> This constant meditation on eternity often broke his rest, and made sleep to flee from his eyes; this animated him with fervour in his retirement, and perpetual penance, and made him watch whole nights in sighs and tears to implore the divine mercy. In this solitude his employment was sometimes to pour forth his soul in songs of praise, and to entertain himself on the sweet motives of the divine love; sometimes the remembrance of eternal joys comforted his soul and gave him already a kind of foretaste of them; and he often considered the terrors of the divine judgments and the eternal torments prepared for sinners, being strongly affected with the dread of that which is of all others the most grievous, the pain of loss, or the everlasting privation of God.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 6 :*

ST BRUNO, founder of the Carthusian monks, 1101; “Labour succeeded Prayer” in the life of these holy anchorites, the only ancient religious order in the Church which never had any reform nor ever required any : ST BRUNO, Bishop of Segni, and ST BRUNO, Bishop of Wurtzburg, both flourished in the same age : ST FAITH or FIDES, virgin, and others ; Faith, who suffered under Dacian, was a beautiful young girl subjected to a terrible death by burning ; Dacian apprehended numbers of the spectators who pitied her ; refusing, as she had done, to sacrifice to the heathen gods, they were beheaded.

## OCTOBER 7

### ST OSITH, VIRGIN

SHE was born at Quarendon, and was daughter of Frewald, a Mercian prince, and niece of Editha, to whom belonged the town and manor of Ailesbury, where she was brought up with her pious aunt. Osith was married young to a king of the East-Angles; but the same day obtained his consent to live always a virgin. That king confirming her in her religious purpose, bestowed on her the manor of Chick, in which she built a monastery. She had governed this house many years with great sanctity when she was crowned with martyrdom in the inroads of Hinguar and Hubba, the barbarous Danish leaders, being beheaded for her constancy in her faith and virtue, about the year 870. For fear of the Danish pirates, her body, after some time, was removed to Ailesbury, and remained there forty-six years; after which it was brought back to Chick, or Chich, in Essex, near Colchester, which place was for some time called St Osithe's, as Camden takes notice. A great abbey of regular canons was erected under her invocation, which continued to the dissolution famous for the relics and honoured with many miracles.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 7 :*

ST JUSTINA OF PADUA, virgin and martyr, suffered death under Diocletian about 304. She is amongst the most illustrious of holy virgins whose triumph edified the Church : ST MARCELLUS and ST APELEIUS, martyrs, devoutly honoured at Placentia in Italy : ST MARK, Pope, 336, a Roman by birth, succeeded St Silvester, but held that dignity only eight months and twenty days ; famed for his extraordinary disinterestedness : ST OSITH, virgin : ST SERGIUS and ST BACCHUS, martyrs ; illustrious officers in the army, who suffered with great constancy and died a glorious death under Maximilian ; their tomb was famed for miracles in 431.



OCTOBER 8

## ST BRIDGET, WIDOW

(A.D. 1373)

[From the bull of her canonization published by Boniface IX. an. 1391; Bullar. t. i. p. 297. Helyot, *Hist. des Ord. Relig.* t. iv. p. 25. Stevens, *Monast.* t. ii. p. 230. Godeau, *Eloges des Princes et Princesses*, p. 454. Messenius *Scandiæ illustratæ*, t. ix. p. 43, aucta a Joan. Peringkioldo, fol. Stockholmæ, 1700. Vastovius in *vita St Brigittæ*, cum notis Erii Benzelli in *Vastovii Vitem Aquiloniam*. An. 1708.]

ST BIRGIT, more commonly called Bridget or Brigit, was daughter of Birger, a prince of the royal blood of Sweden, legislator of Upland, and of Ingeburgis, daughter to Sigridis, a lady descended from the kings of the Goths. Both the parents spent their lives in fervent exercises of piety, and had a singular devotion to the sacred passion of Christ. Birger consecrated all Fridays in a special manner to practices of penance, and never failed on that day to confess his sins and receive the holy eucharist, endeavouring to put himself into such a disposition as to be able to bear patiently all the crosses that might befall him till the next Friday. Ingeburgis was not less devoutly inclined, but died soon after the birth of our saint, which happened in the year 1304. Bridget was brought up by an aunt, who was a lady of singular piety. She did not begin to speak till she was three years old; and the first use she made of her tongue was to praise God: nor did she even in her childhood ever take pleasure in any discourse but what was serious. No symptoms ever appeared in her of anger, spite, envy, jealousy, untowardness, or disobedience. She assisted assiduously at the church office and at sermons. At ten years of age she was most tenderly affected by a sermon which she heard on the passion of Christ; and the night following seemed to see him hanging upon his cross, covered with wounds, and pouring forth his blood in streams in every part of his body; at the same time, she thought she heard him say to her, "Look upon me, my daughter." "Alas," said she, "who has treated you thus?" She seemed to herself to hear him answer, "They who despise me, and are insensible to my love for them." The impression which this moving spectacle made upon her mind was never effaced; and from that time the sufferings of her Redeemer became the subject of her most assiduous meditation, even when she was at work at her needle, and she could scarce ever call them to mind without shedding abundance of tears. In obedience to her father, when she was only sixteen years of age she married Ulpho, Prince of Nericia, in Sweden, who was himself only eighteen. This pious couple passed the first year of their marriage in continence, and, having enrolled themselves in the third Order of St Francis, lived in their own house as if they had been in a regular and austere monastery. They afterwards had eight children, four boys and four girls, who were all favoured with the blessings of divine grace. After the birth

of these children, the parents, at the suggestion of St Bridget, made a mutual vow of continency, and consecrated their estates more than ever to the use of the poor, whom they looked upon as their own family, and for whom they built an hospital, in which they served the sick with their own hands. Ulpho entered into the most perfect sentiments of virtue and penance, with which the example of his wife inspired him; and resigning his place in the king's council and renouncing the court, he imitated her in all her devotions. To break all worldly ties by forsaking their country and friends, they made a painful pilgrimage to Compostella. In their return Ulpho fell sick at Arras. Bridget spared neither solicitude, pains, nor prayers for his recovery, and received an assurance of it by a revelation. He was accordingly restored again to his health, and arrived in Sweden, where he died soon after, in 1344, in the odour of sanctity, in the monastery of Alvastre, of the Cistercian Order, which rule, according to some, he had embraced, though others say that he was only preparing himself for that state.

Bridget being by his death entirely at liberty to pursue her inclinations as to the manner of life which she desired to lead, renounced the rank of princess which she held in the world, to take upon her more perfectly the state of a penitent. Her husband's estates she divided among her children, according to the laws of justice and equity, and from that day seemed to forget what she had been in the world. She changed her habit, using no more linen except for a veil to cover her head, wearing a rough hair shift and, for a girdle, cords full of knots. The austerities which she practised are incredible; on Fridays she redoubled her mortifications and other exercises, allowing herself no refection but a little bread and water. About the time of her husband's death, in 1344, she built the great monastery of Wastein, in the diocese of Lincopen, in Sweden, in which she placed sixty nuns and, in a separate enclosure, friars, to the number of thirteen priests, in honour of the twelve apostles and St Paul; four deacons, representing the four doctors of the church, and eight lay-brothers. She prescribed them the rule of St Austin, with certain particular constitutions, which are said to have been dictated to her by our Saviour in a vision. The chief object of the particular devotions prescribed by this rule are the Passion of Christ and the honour of his holy mother. In this institute, as in the Order of Fontevrault, the men are subject to the prioress of the nuns in temporals, but in spirituals the women are under the jurisdiction of the friars; the reason of which is, because the Order being principally instituted for religious women, the men were chiefly admitted only to afford them such spiritual assistance as they want. The convents of the men and women are separated by an inviolable enclosure; but are contiguous so as to have the same church, in which the nuns keep choir above in a doxal, the men underneath in the church; but they can never see

one another. The number of religious persons in each double monastery is fixed as above; but most of the great or double monasteries which were situated in the North were destroyed at the change of religion, with that of Wastain or Vatzén, which was the chief house of the Order.

St Bridget had spent two years in her monastery at Wastain when she undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, in order to venerate the relics of so many saints which are honoured in that city, and especially to offer up her fervent prayers at the tombs of the apostles. The example of her virtue shone forth with brighter lustre in that great city. The austerity of her watchings and penance, the tenderness of her devotion, her love of retirement, her fervour in visiting the churches, and in serving the sick in the hospitals, her severity towards herself, her mildness to all others, her profound humility and her charity appeared in all she did. For the thirty last years of her life she was accustomed to go every day to confession, and she communicated several times every week. The frequent use of the sacraments kindled every time fresh ardour in her soul. Nothing is more famous in the life of St Bridget than the many revelations with which she was favoured by God, chiefly concerning the sufferings of our Blessed Saviour, and revolutions which were to happen in certain kingdoms. It is certain that God, who communicates himself to his servants many ways, with infinite condescension, and distributes his gifts with infinite wisdom, treated this great saint and certain others with special marks of his goodness, conversing frequently with them in a most familiar manner, as the devout Blossius observes. But to distinguish the operations of the Holy Ghost and the illusions of the enemy requires great prudence and attention to the just criteria or rules for the discernment of spirits. Nor can any private revelations ever be of the same nature, or have the same certainty with those that are public, which were made to the prophets, to be by them promulgated to the church, and confirmed to men by the sanction of miracles and the authority of the church.

What is most of all praiseworthy in St Bridget is, that in true simplicity of heart she always submitted her revelations to the judgment of the pastors of the church, and, deeming herself unworthy even of the ordinary light of faith, she was far from ever glorying in any extraordinary favours, which she never desired, and on which she never employed her mind but in order to increase her love and humility. To live according to the spirit of the mysteries of religion is something much greater and more sublime than to know hidden things or to be favoured with the most extraordinary visions. Her ardent love of Jesus Christ crucified moved her to make a painful pilgrimage to visit the holy places in Palestine, where she watered with her pious tears the chief places which Christ had sanctified by his divine steps and purpled with his adorable blood. Being returned safe to Rome, she lived there a year longer, but during that interval was afflicted

with grievous distempers, under which she suffered the most excruciating pains with an heroic patience and resignation. Having given her last moving instructions to her son Birger and her daughter Catherine, who were with her, she was laid on sackcloth, received the last sacraments, and her soul, being released from its prison of clay, took its flight to that kingdom after which she had always most ardently sighed, on the 23rd of July 1373, being seventy-one years old. Her body was buried in the Church of St Laurence, in Panis Perna, belonging to a convent of Poor Clares, but a year after her death, in July 1374, it was translated to her monastery of Wastein, in Sweden, by the procurement of her son Birger and St Catherine. She was canonized by Boniface IX in 1391, on the 7th of October, and her festival is appointed on the day following. At the petition of the clergy and nobility of Sweden, the general council of Constance examined again the proofs, and unanimously declared her enrolled among the saints on the 1st of February 1415.<sup>1</sup> Her canonization was again confirmed by Martin V in 1419.<sup>2</sup>

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 8 :*

ST BRIDGET OF SWEDEN, widow, 1373; her eight children all served God with singular devotion; after the death of her good husband she left the world, dividing her estates among her children according to the laws of equity and justice: ST KEYNA, called by the Welsh "the virgin," lived as a recluse in a wood in Somerset; once greatly honoured in Wales, her father having been a prince of that country: ST PELAGIA, onetime a comedian in Antioch, converted after hearing a sermon, was baptized, and, having taken the veil in Jerusalem, shut herself up in a grotto on Mount Olivet, in the fifth age: and ST THAIS, a noted penitent in Egypt, who, having been educated a Christian, lived a life of public shame until rescued therefrom by a holy hermit of Thebais.

## OCTOBER 9

### ST DIONYSIUS, BISHOP OF PARIS, AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

(A.D. 272)

[From St Greg. of Tours, *Hist. Fran.* lib. i. c. 30. The acts of their martyrdom extant in Bosquet, *Eccl. Gallic. Hist.* t. ii. pp. 68, 73, were compiled from oral relations about the seventh century, those which were writ by Massus, Bishop of Paris, under Constantius Chlorus, almost contemporary, not being then extant. See Rivet, *Hist. Littér.* t. iv. p. 38; t. i. par. 1, p. 305; par. 2, p. 49; Tillemont, t. iv. p. 443; Dom. Felibien, *Hist. de l'Abbaie de St Denys*, anno 1707, folio; Append. p. 162; Du Bois, *Hist. Eccl. Paris*, t. i. Orsi, lib. vii. n. iv.; t. iii. p. 141.]

OF all the Roman missionaries sent into Gaul, St Dionysius carried the faith the furthest into the country, fixing his see at Paris, and by him and his disciples the sees of Chartres, Senlis, and Meaux were erected,<sup>3</sup> and, shortly after, those of Cologne and others, which we find in a flourishing condition and governed by excellent pastors in the fourth century, witness St Maternus of Cologne, &c. SS. Fuscian and Victoricus, Crispin and Crispinian, Rufinus and Valerius, Lucian of Beauvais, Quintin, Piaton,

<sup>1</sup> See Conc. Constant. p. 39. Lensant, *Hist. du Concile de Constance*, lib. i. § 71, p. 67. Herman. ab Hardt. *Prolegom.* III, Conc. Constant. pp. 15 et 28, t. iv. p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> In *proemio Op. St Birgittæ*.

<sup>3</sup> *Gallia Christ. Nova* t. i. p. 521; Rivet, t. i. p. 308.

Regulus or Riticius of Senlis, and Marcellus are called disciples or fellow-labourers of St Dionysius, and came from Rome to preach the name of Christ in Gaul. We are assured in the acts of the martyrdom of St Dionysius that this zealous bishop built a church at Paris, and converted great numbers to the faith. A glorious martyrdom crowned his labours for the salvation of souls and the exaltation of the name of Christ. He seems to have suffered in the persecution of Valerian in 272, though some moderns defer his death to the beginning of the reign of Maximian Hercules, who resided chiefly in Gaul from the year 286 to 292. Ado calls the judge by whom he was condemned, Fescenius. The Acts of his Martyrdom inform us that after a long and cruel imprisonment he was beheaded for the faith, together with Rusticus, a priest, and Eleutherius, a deacon. The Acts add that the bodies of the martyrs were thrown into the river Seine, but taken up and honourably interred by a Christian lady named Catalla, not far from the place where they had been beheaded. The Christians soon after built a chapel over their tomb. In 469, through the pious exhortations of St Geneviève, a church was raised upon the ruins of this chapel, which was a place of great devotion, much resorted to by pilgrims, as appears from the works of St Gregory of Tours in many places, by which it is clear that this church stood without the walls of the city, though very near them. By a donation of Clotaire II, it appears that here was then a religious community governed by an abbot. Dagobert, who died in 638, founded the great abbey in this place in which he was interred, and which has been for many ages the usual burial-place of the French kings. Pepin and his son, Charlemagne, were principal benefactors to this monastery, which was magnificently rebuilt by abbot Suger. The relics of SS. Dionysius, Rusticus, and Eleutherius are kept here in three silver shrines. The miraculous cure of Pope Stephen II in this church has been already related. St Dionysius of France is commonly called St Denis, from the French Denys.

Those apostolic pastors who converted so many nations to Christ were men filled with his Spirit, who regarded nothing but his glory, and acted and lived for him alone. Such a one sees nothing in this world which he hopes or desires; nothing that he much fears; he seeks no composition with it while he is engaged in the cause of his master; no threats or apprehensions of terror from its persecution can damp his courage in defending the honour of God, or cool his zeal for the salvation of souls.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 9 :*

ST DIONYSIUS or DENIS, Bishop of Paris, and his COMPANION MARTYRS, RUSTICUS, a priest, and ELEUTHERIUS, a deacon; of all the Roman missionaries sent into Gaul, St Dionysius carried the faith furthest into that country: ST DOMINUS, an officer of the bedchamber to Maximian Hercules, beheaded in 304 on the Claudian Way; glorified by many miracles wrought at his tomb: ST GUISLAIN, Abbot, who founded a monastery in honour of St Peter and St Paul, which he governed with sanctity and prudence for thirty-six years: ST LEWIS BERTRAND, son of a notary, born January 1, 1526, the eldest of nine children all remarkable for their piety, founded on the example and early teaching of their good parents.

OCTOBER 10

## ST PAULINUS, ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, CONFESSOR

ST PAULINUS is celebrated in the Roman Martyrology, and in those of our country, as the apostle of the largest and at that time the most powerful of the seven kingdoms of the English Saxons. St Austin being in want of labourers, St Gregory the Great, in 601, sent him Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and several others, together with sacred vessels, altar-cloths, and other ornaments for churches, vestments for priests, relics of the apostles and martyrs, and many books; decreeing by letters that when the northern countries should receive the faith, York should be appointed a metropolitanical see, in like manner with Canterbury. St Paulinus, upon his arrival, employed his labours in Kent with great zeal and piety. Edwin, the powerful king of Northumberland, demanded in marriage Edelburge, princess of Kent, but was answered by her brother, King Eadbald, "That a Christian maid could not lawfully marry an idolater, lest the faith and its mysteries should be profaned by the company of one who was a stranger to the worship of the true God." Edwin promised entire liberty and protection with regard to her religion, and expressed his own favourable dispositions to the same. Hereupon the princess was sent, and no one being judged more proper to be her guardian angel and to undertake this new harvest than Paulinus, he was ordained bishop by St Justus, Archbishop of Canterbury, on the 25th of July 625, and accompanied the young queen to her spouse. It was a continual affliction to his heart to live in the midst of a people who were strangers to the true worship of God, and all his tears, prayers, and endeavours to make him known and served by them were at first unsuccessful; for God was pleased to put his constancy and fidelity for some time to the trial. His prayers were at length heard. King Edwin was brought over to the faith in a wonderful manner, as has been related in his life; but he desired the concurrence of the chief men of his army and kingdom. A great assembly was called, such perhaps as the Saxon Chronicles often speak of under the name of Wittena Gemot, or Council of the Wites, which many moderns call the original of our parliament. In this assembly the pagan high priest himself condemned loudly the worship of idols, and free liberty was given for any to embrace the Christian faith. The king was baptized by St Paulinus at York on Easter Sunday, in 627, together with his son Osfrid, whom he had by a former wife, and his niece Hilda. The ceremony was performed in a church of wood, raised in haste. King Edwin afterwards began one of stone, which was finished by St Oswald. Bede takes notice that churches and fonts not being yet built spacious enough for the crowds that flocked to receive baptism, St Paulinus, when the king resided amongst the Deiri, baptized

in the river Swale, near Cataract, where the king's palace stood, and which was anciently a great city, as appears from Ptolemy and others, though it is now only a small village, called Catarric, with a bridge, a little below Richmond.

Our zealous bishop crossed the Humber and preached the faith to the inhabitants of Lindsey, in the kingdom of Mercia, and baptized Blecca, the Saxon prince or governor of Lincoln, who is said to have derived his pedigree from Woden no less than the chief kings who founded the Saxon heptarchy. At Lincoln St Paulinus built a church of stone, in which, after the death of St Justus, he consecrated St Honorius Archbishop of Canterbury. Pope Honorius sent a pallium to St Paulinus as the northern metropolitan in Britain; and in his letter of congratulation with King Edwin upon his conversion, he decreed as follows: "As to what you desire concerning the ordination of your bishops, we willingly agree to it; and we send palliums to your metropolitans, Honorius and Paulinus, that whenever it shall please God to call either of them, the other may ordain a successor for him by virtue of this letter."<sup>1</sup> St Paulinus, being assisted by his deacon, James, baptized a great multitude in the Trent, near Tiouulfingacaester, which Camden and Smith take to have been Southwell, in Nottinghamshire, where a collegiate church, and other monuments of piety, were testimonials of the grateful devotion of the people. The East-Angles also received the faith by the zeal of St Paulinus and St Edwin. This good king being slain in battle in 633, with his son Osfrid, whom he had by a former wife, and who had been christened with him, St Paulinus conducted the Queen Ethelburge, with her little son, and Edwin's grandson by Osfrid, into Kent by sea. There she founded a nunnery at Liming, in which she took the veil. She is mentioned in the English Martyrology on the 10th of September. James, whom our saint left behind, took care of the distressed church of York, and baptized many, living near Cataract, on the Swale, at a village which afterwards took his name, says Bede, where he died in a very advanced age. St Paulinus took with him into Kent the rich plate which King Edwin had bestowed on the church, particularly a large cross of gold and a golden chalice for the ministry of the altar which, with his pall, he left at his death in the church of Rhofi, now Rochester. For that see being then vacant, at the entreaty of King Eadbald, the Archbishop Honorius appointed Paulinus bishop thereof, he not being permitted to quit his royal charge or return to York. He died happily on the 10th of October 644, having been bishop nineteen years, says Bede. When Gundulf, the Norman, was Bishop of Rochester, Archbishop Lanfranc rebuilt the cathedral Church of St Andrew, and causing the bones of St Paulinus to be taken up, placed them in a rich shrine; the festival of which translation was kept at Rochester on the 10th of January. See Bede,

<sup>1</sup> Bede, lib. ii. c. 17.

Hist. lib. i. c. 29, lib. ii. c. 14, 20; Thomas Stubbes (a learned Dominican who flourished in 1360), in his *Actus Episcop. Eborac.* p. 1687 (inter 10, Angl. Scriptor. published by Sir Roger Twisden), t. ii., *Britannia Sancta*, and the learned Mr Drake's *Antiquities of York*, t. ii.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 10 :*

ST FRANCIS BORGIA, Duke of Gandia, the third general of the Jesuit Order ; he died in Rome in 1572 : ST JOHN OF BRIDLINGTON, an eminent contemplative, whose study ever was to know himself and God, to discover and wipe away with tears of compunction all imperfections of his soul, and to purge his affections from whatever could defile them ; he was favoured with frequent ecstasies and died in 1397 : ST PAULINUS, one of the second band of missionaries sent by St Gregory the Great to England, first Archbishop of York, died 644.

## OCTOBER 11

### SS. TARACHUS, PROBUS, AND ANDRONICUS, MARTYRS

(A.D. 304)

[From their original presidial Acts in Ruinart, p. 419. See Tillemont, t. v. p. 285.]

THE holy name of God was glorified by the triumph of these martyrs in the persecution of Diocletian, at Anazarbus, in Cilicia, probably in the year 304, when the edicts against the Christians were made general and extended to all the laity without exception. Their acts are a precious monument of ecclesiastical antiquity. The three first parts contain the triple examination which the saints underwent at Tarsus, Mopsuestia, and Anazarbus, three cities in Cilicia ; and are an authentic copy of the pro-consular register, which certain Christians purchased of the public notaries for the sum of two hundred denarii, upwards of six pounds sterling. The last part was added by Marcian, Felix, and Verus, three Christians, who were present at their martyrdom, and afterwards stole the bodies from the guards and interred them, resolving to spend the remainder of their lives near the place, and after their deaths to be buried in the same vault with them.

The three martyrs were joined in the confession of the same faith, but differed in their age and countries. Tarachus was a Roman by extraction, though born in Isauria ; he had served in the army, but had procured his discharge for fear of being compelled to do something that was contrary to the duty of a Christian ; he was at that time sixty-five years old. Probus, a native of Pamphilia, had resigned a considerable fortune that he might be more at liberty to serve Christ. Andronicus was a young nobleman, of one of the principal families of the city of Ephesus. Being apprehended at Pompeiopolis, in Cilicia, they were presented to Numerian Maximus, governor of the province, upon his arrival in that city, and by his order were conducted to Tarsus, the metropolis, to wait his return. Maximus being arrived there and seated on his tribunal, Demetrius, the centurion, brought them before him, saying, they were the persons who had been



presented to him at Pompeiopolis for professing the impious religion of the Christians and disobeying the command of the emperors. Maximus addressed himself first to Tarachus, observing that he began with him because he was advanced in years, and then asked his name. Tarachus replied:

"I am a Christian."

*Maximus.* "Speak not of thy impiety, but tell me thy name."

*Tarachus.* "I am a Christian."

*Max.* "Strike him upon the mouth, and bid him not answer one thing for another." Tarachus, after receiving a buffet on his jaws, said, "I tell you my true name. If you would know that which my parents gave me, it is Tarachus; when I bore arms I went by the name of Victor."

*Max.* "What is thy profession, and of what country art thou?"

*Tara.* "I am of a Roman family, and was born at Claudiopolis, in Isauria. I am by profession a soldier, but quitted the service upon the account of my religion."

*Max.* "In consideration of thy grey hairs, I will procure thee the favour and friendship of the emperors if thou wilt obey their orders. Draw near and sacrifice to the gods, as the emperors themselves do all the world over."

*Tara.* "They are deceived by the devil in so doing."

*Max.* "Break his jaws for saying the emperors are deceived."

*Tara.* "I repeat it, as men they are deluded."

*Max.* "Sacrifice to our gods and renounce thy folly."

*Tara.* "I cannot renounce the law of God."

*Max.* "Is there any law, wretch, but that which we obey?"

*Tara.* "There is, and you transgress it by adoring stocks and stones, the works of men's hands."

*Max.* "Strike him on the face, saying, abandon thy folly."

*Tara.* "What you call folly is the salvation of my soul, and I will never leave it."

*Max.* "But I will make thee leave it, and force thee to be wise."

*Tara.* "Do with my body what you please, it is entirely in your power." Then Maximus said, "Strip him and beat him with rods." Tarachus, when beaten, said, "You have now made me truly wise. I am strengthened by your blows, and my confidence in God and in Jesus Christ is increased."

*Max.* "Wretch, how canst thou deny a plurality of gods when, according to thy own confession, thou servest two gods? Didst thou not give the name of God to a certain person, named Christ?"

*Tara.* "Right; for this is the Son of the living God; he is the hope of the Christians, and the author of salvation to such as suffer for his sake."

*Max.* "Forbear this idle talk; draw near and sacrifice."

*Tara.* "I am no idle talker; I am sixty-five years old; thus have I been brought up, and I cannot forsake the truth."

*Max.* "Let him be loaded with large chains, and carried back to prison. Bring forth the next in years."

Demetrius, the centurion, said, "He is here, my lord."

*Max.* "What is thy name?"

*Probus.* "My chief and most honourable name is Christian, but the name I go by in the world is Probus."

*Max.* "Of what country art thou, and of what family?"

*Pro.* "My father was of Thrace; I am a plebeian, born at Sida in Pamphilia, and profess Christianity."

*Max.* "That will do thee no service. Be advised by me, sacrifice to the gods, that thou mayest be honoured by the emperors and enjoy my friendship."

*Pro.* "I want nothing of that kind. Formerly I was possessed of a considerable estate, but I relinquished it to serve the living God through Jesus Christ."

*Max.* "Take off his garments, gird him, lay him at his full length, and lash him with ox's sinews." Demetrius, the centurion, said to him, whilst they were beating him, "Spare thyself, my friend; see how thy blood runs in streams on the ground."

*Pro.* "Do what you will with my body; your torments are sweet perfumes to me."

*Max.* "Is this thy obstinate folly incurable? What canst thou hope for?"

*Pro.* "I am wiser than you are, because I do not worship devils."

*Max.* "Turn him, and strike him on the belly."

*Pro.* "Lord, assist thy servant."

*Max.* "Ask him, at every stripe, where is thy helper?"

*Pro.* "He helps me, and will help me; for I take so little notice of your torments that I do not obey you."

*Max.* "Look, wretch, upon thy mangled body; the ground is covered with thy blood."

*Pro.* "The more my body suffers for Jesus Christ, the more is my soul refreshed."

*Max.* "Put fetters on his hands and feet, with his legs distended in the stocks to the fourth hole, and let nobody come to dress his wounds. Bring the third to the bar."

Demetrius, the centurion, said, "Here he stands, my lord."

*Max.* "What is thy name?"

*Andronicus.* "My true name is Christian, and the name by which I am commonly known among men is Andronicus."

*Max.* "What is your family?"

*And.* "My father is one of the first rank in Ephesus."

*Max.* "Adore the gods and obey the emperors, who are our fathers and masters."

*And.* "The devil is your father whilst you do his works."

*Max.* "Youth makes you insolent; I have torments ready."

*And.* "I am prepared for whatever may happen."

*Max.* "Strip him naked, gird him, and stretch him on the rack."

Demetrius, the centurion, said to the martyr, "Obey, my friend, before thy body is torn and mangled."

*And.* "It is better for me to have my body tormented than to lose my soul."

*Max.* "Sacrifice before I put thee to the most cruel death."

*And.* "I have never sacrificed to demons from my infancy, and I will not now begin."

*Max.* "Wretch, art thou insensible to torments. Thou dost not yet know what it is to suffer fire and razors. When thou hast felt them thou wilt, perhaps, give over thy folly."

*And.* "This folly is expedient for us who hope in Jesus Christ. Earthly wisdom leads to eternal death."

*Max.* "Tear his limbs with the utmost violence."

*And.* "I have done no evil; yet you torment me like a murderer. I contend for that piety which is due to the true God."

*Max.* "If thou hadst but the least sense of piety thou wouldst adore the gods whom the emperors so religiously worship."

*And.* "It is not piety, but impiety to abandon the true God and to adore brass and marble."

*Max.* "Execrable villain, are then the emperors guilty of impieties? Hoist him again, and gore his sides."

*And.* "I am in your hands; do with my body what you please."

*Max.* "Lay salt upon his wounds, and rub his sides with broken tiles."

*And.* "Your torments have refreshed my body."

*Max.* "I will cause thee to die gradually."

*And.* "Your menaces do not terrify me; my courage is above all that your malice can invent."

*Max.* "Put a heavy chain about his neck, and another upon his legs, and keep him in close prison."

Thus ended the first examination; the second was held at Mopsuestia.

Flavius Clemens Numerianus Maximus, governor of Cilicia, sitting on his tribunal, said to Demetrius the centurion, "Bring forth the impious wretches who follow the religion of the Christians." Demetrius said, "Here they are, my lord." Maximus said to Tarachus, "Old age is respected in many, on account of the good sense and prudence that generally attend it; wherefore, if you have made a proper use of the time allowed

you for reflection, I presume your own discretion has wrought in you a change of sentiments; as a proof of which it is required that you sacrifice to the gods, which cannot fail of recommending you to the esteem of your superiors."

*Tara.* "I am a Christian, and I wish you and the emperors would leave your blindness, and embrace the truth which leads to life."

*Max.* "Break his jaws with a stone, and bid him leave off his folly."

*Tara.* "This folly is true wisdom."

*Max.* "Now they have loosened all thy teeth, wretch, take pity on thyself, come to the altar, and sacrifice to the gods, to prevent severer treatment."

*Tara.* "Though you cut my body into a thousand pieces, you will not be able to shake my resolution; because it is Christ who gives me strength to stand my ground."

*Max.* "Wretch, accursed by the gods, I will find means to drive out thy folly. Bring in a pan of burning coals, and hold his hands in the fire till they are burnt."

*Tara.* "I fear not your temporal fire, which soon passes: but I dread eternal flames."

*Max.* "See, thy hands are well baked; they are consumed by the fire; is it not time for thee to grow wise? Sacrifice."

*Tara.* "If you have any other torments in store for me, employ them; I hope I shall be able to withstand all your attacks."

*Max.* "Hang him by the feet, with his head over a great smoke."

*Tara.* "After having proved an overmatch for your fire, I am not afraid of your smoke."

*Max.* "Bring vinegar and salt, and force them up his nostrils."

*Tara.* "Your vinegar is sweet to me, and your salt insipid."

*Max.* "Put mustard into the vinegar, and thrust it up his nose."

*Tara.* "Your ministers impose upon you: they have given me honey instead of mustard."

*Max.* "Enough for the present; I will make it my business to invent fresh tortures to bring thee to thy senses: I will not be baffled."

*Tara.* "You will find me prepared for the attack."

*Max.* "Away with him to the dungeon. Bring in another."

Demetrius, the centurion, said, "My lord, here is Probus."

*Max.* "Well, Probus, hast thou considered the matter, and art thou disposed to sacrifice to the gods, after the example of the emperors?"

*Probus.* "I appear here again with fresh vigour. The torments I have endured have hardened my body; and my soul is strengthened in her courage and proof against all you can inflict. I have a living God in heaven; him I serve and adore, and no other."

*Max.* "What! Villain, are not ours living gods?"

*Pro.* "Can stones and wood, the workmanship of a statuary, be living gods? You know not what you do when you sacrifice to them."

*Max.* "What insolence! At least sacrifice to the great god Jupiter. I will excuse you as to the rest."

*Pro.* "Do not you blush to call him god who was guilty of adulteries, incests, and other most enormous crimes?"

*Max.* "Beat his mouth with a stone, and bid him not blaspheme."

*Pro.* "Why this evil treatment? I have spoken no worse of Jupiter than they do who serve him. I utter no lie: I speak the truth, as you yourself well know."

*Max.* "Heat bars of iron, and apply them to his feet."

*Pro.* "This fire is without heat: at least, I feel none."

*Max.* "Hoist him on the rack, and let him be scourged with thongs of raw leather till his shoulders are flayed."

*Pro.* "All this does me no harm; invent something new, and you will see the power of God, who is in me and strengthens me."

*Max.* "Shave his head, and lay burning coals upon it."

*Pro.* "You have burnt my head and my feet. You see, notwithstanding, that I still continue God's servant and disregard your torments. He will save me: your gods can only destroy."

*Max.* "Beat his face, that he may learn to say the gods, and not God."

*Pro.* "You unjustly destroy my mouth and disfigure my face because I speak the truth."

*Max.* "I will also cause thy blasphemous tongue to be plucked out to make thee comply."

*Pro.* "Besides the tongue which serves me for utterance, I have an internal, an immortal tongue, which is out of your reach."

*Max.* "Take him to prison. Let the third come in."

Demetrius, the centurion, said, "He is here."

*Max.* "Your companions, Andronicus, were at first obstinate, but gained nothing thereby but torments and disgrace, and have been at last compelled to obey. They shall receive considerable recompenses. Therefore, to escape the like torments, sacrifice to the gods, and thou shalt be honoured accordingly. But if thou refusest, I swear, by the immortal gods and by the invincible emperors, that thou shalt not escape out of my hands with thy life."

*Andronicus.* "Why do you endeavour to deceive me with lies? They have not renounced the true God. And had that been so, you should never find me guilty of such an impiety."

*Max.* "Bind him to the stakes, and scourge him with raw thongs."

*And.* "There is nothing new or extraordinary in this torment."

The clerk, Athanasius, said, "Thy whole body is but one wound from head to foot, and dost thou count this nothing?"

*And.* "They who love the living God make very small account of all this."

*Max.* "Rub his back with salt."

*And.* "Give orders, I pray you, that they do not spare me; that being well seasoned I may be in no danger of putrefaction, and may be the better able to withstand your torments."

*Max.* "Turn him, and beat him upon the belly, to open afresh his first wounds."

*And.* "You saw, when I was brought last before your tribunal, how I was perfectly cured of the wounds I received by the first day's tortures: he that cured me then can cure me a second time."

Maximus, addressing himself to the guards of the prison, "Villains and traitors," said he, "did I not strictly forbid you to suffer anyone to see them or dress their wounds? Yet, see here!"

*And.* "Senseless man! The physician that has healed me is no less powerful than he is tender and charitable. You know him not. He cures not by the application of medicines, but by his word alone. Though he dwells in heaven, he is present everywhere, but you know him not."

*Max.* "My authority shall not be baffled by thee."

*And.* "Nor shall it ever be said that the cause of Jesus Christ is vanquished by your authority."

*Max.* "Let me have several kinds of tortures in readiness against my next sitting. Put this man in prison loaded with chains, and let no one be admitted to visit them in the dungeon."

The third examination was held at Anazarbus. In it Tarachus answered first, with his usual constancy, saying to all threats that a speedy death would finish his victory and complete his happiness; and that long torments would procure him the greater recompense. When Maximus had caused him to be bound and stretched on the rack, he said, "I could allege the rescript of Diocletian, which forbids judges to put military men to the rack. But I waive my privilege lest you should suspect me of cowardice. Do what you please with my body, not only whilst it is living, but also after my death." Maximus ordered his lips, cheeks, and whole face to be slashed and cut. Tarachus said, "You have disfigured my face; but have added new beauty to my soul. I fear not any of your inventions, for I am clothed with the divine armour." The tyrant ordered spits to be heated and applied red-hot to his arm-pits; then his ears to be cut off. At which the martyr said, "My heart will not be less attentive to the word of God." Maximus said, "Tear the skin off his head; then cover it with burning coals." Tarachus replied, "Though you should order my whole body to be flayed you will not be able to separate me from my God."

*Max.* "Apply the red-hot spits once more to his arm-pits and sides."

*Tara.* "O God of heaven, look down upon me, and be my judge."

The governor then sent him back to prison to be reserved for the public shows the day following, and called for the next.

Probus being brought forth, Maximus again exhorted him to sacrifice; but after many words ordered him to be bound and hung up by the feet; then red-hot spits to be applied to his sides and back. Probus said, "My body is in your power. May the Lord of heaven and earth vouchsafe to consider my patience and the humility of my heart."

*Max.* "The God whom thou implorest has delivered thee into my hands."

*Pro.* "He loves men."

*Max.* "Open his mouth and pour in some of the wine which has been offered upon the altars, and thrust some of the sanctified meat into his mouth."

*Pro.* "See, O Lord, the violence they offer me, and judge my cause."

*Max.* "Now thou seest that after suffering a thousand torments rather than to sacrifice, thou hast nevertheless partook of a sacrifice."

*Pro.* "You have done no great feat in making me taste these abominable offerings against my will."

*Max.* "No matter, it is now done; promise now to do it voluntarily and thou shalt be released."

*Pro.* "God forbid that I should yield; but know that if you should force into me all the abominable offerings of your whole altars, I should be no ways defiled: for God sees the violence which I suffer."

*Max.* "Heat the spits again, and burn the calves of his legs with them." Then he said to Probus, "There is not a sound part in thy whole body, and still thou persistest in thy folly. Wretch, what canst thou hope for?"

*Pro.* "I have abandoned my body over to you that my soul may remain whole and sound."

*Max.* "Make some sharp nails red-hot, and pierce his hands with them."

*Pro.* "O my Saviour, I return you most hearty thanks that you have been pleased to make me share in your own sufferings."

*Max.* "The great number of thy torments make thee more foolish."

*Pro.* "Would to God your soul was not blind and in darkness."

*Max.* "Now thou hast lost the use of all thy members, thou complainest of me for not having deprived thee of thy sight. Prick him in the eyes, but by little and little, till you have bored out the organs of his sight."

*Pro.* "Behold I am now blind. Thou hast destroyed the eyes of my body; but canst not take away those of my soul."

*Max.* "Thou continuest still to argue, but thou art condemned to eternal darkness."

*Pro.* "Did you know the darkness in which your soul is plunged, you would see yourself much more miserable than I am."

*Max.* "What! dost thou hope to survive these torments? Canst thou flatter thyself that I shall allow thee one moment's respite?"

*Pro.* "I expect nothing from you but a cruel death; and I ask of God only the grace to persevere in the confession of his holy name to the end."

*Max.* "I will leave thee to languish as such an impious wretch deserves. Take him hence. Let the prisoners be closely guarded, that none of their friends, who would congratulate with them, may find access. I design them for the shows. Let Andronicus be brought in. He is the most resolute of the three."

The governor pressed Andronicus again to comply, adding that his two companions had at length sacrificed to the gods and to the emperors themselves. The martyr replied, "This is truly the part of an adorer of the god of lies; and by this imposture I know that the men are like the gods whom they serve. May God judge you, O worker of iniquity." Maximus ordered rolls of paper to be made and set on fire upon the belly of the martyr; then bodkins to be heated and laid red-hot betwixt his fingers. Finding him still unshaken, he said to him, "Do not expect to die at once. I will keep thee alive till the time of the shows, that thou mayest behold thy limbs devoured one after another by cruel beasts." Andronicus answered, "You are more inhuman than the tigers, and more insatiable with blood than the most barbarous murderers."

*Max.* "Open his mouth, and put some of the sanctified meat into it, and pour some of the wine into it which hath been offered to the gods."

*And.* "Behold, O Lord, the violence which is offered me."

*Max.* "What wilt thou do now? Thou hast tasted of the offerings taken from the altar. Thou art now initiated in the mysteries of the gods."

*And.* "Know, tyrant, that the soul is not defiled when she suffers involuntarily what she condemns. God, who sees the secrets of hearts, knows that mine has not consented to this abomination."

*Max.* "How long will this frenzy delude thy imagination? It will not deliver thee out of my hands."

*And.* "God will deliver me when he pleases."

*Max.* "This is a fresh extravagance. I will cause that tongue of thine to be cut out to put an end to thy prating."

*And.* "I ask it as a favour that those lips and tongue with which you imagine I have concurred in partaking of the meats and wine offered to idols may be cut off."

*Max.* "Pluck out his teeth, and cut out his blasphemous tongue to the very root; burn them, and then scatter the ashes in the air, that none of his impious companions or of the women may be able to gather them up to keep as something precious or holy. Let him be carried to his dungeon to serve for food to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre."

The trial of the three martyrs being thus concluded, Maximus sent for



Terentianus, the chiliarch or pontiff, and first magistrate of the community in Cilicia, who had the care of the public games and spectacles, and gave him orders to exhibit a public show the next day. In the morning a prodigious multitude of people flocked to the amphitheatre, which was a mile distant from the town of Anazarbus. The governor came thither about noon. The governor at length sent some of his guards to bring the Christians whom he had sentenced to the beasts. The martyrs were in so piteous a condition by their torments that, far from being able to walk, they could not so much as stir their mangled bodies. But they were carried on the backs of porters, and thrown down in the pit of the amphitheatre, below the seat of the governor. No sooner were the martyrs laid down but an almost universal deep silence followed at the sight of such dismal objects, and the people began openly to murmur against the governor for his barbarous cruelty. Many even left the shows and returned to the city, which provoked the governor, and he ordered more soldiers to guard all the avenues to stop any from departing, and to take notice of all who attempted it, that they might be afterwards called to their trial by him. At the same time, he commanded a great number of beasts to be let loose out of their dens into the pit. These fierce creatures rushed out, but all stopped near the doors of their lodges, and would not advance to hurt the martyrs. Maximus, in a fury, called for the keepers and caused one hundred strokes with cudgels to be given them, making them responsible for the tameness of their lions and tigers, because they were less cruel than himself. He threatened even to crucify them unless they let out the most ravenous of their beasts. They turned out a great bear which that very day had killed three men. He walked up slowly towards the martyrs, and began to lick the wounds of Andronicus. That martyr leaned his head on the bear, and endeavoured to provoke him, but in vain. Maximus possessed himself no longer, but ordered the beast to be immediately killed. The bear received the strokes and fell quietly before the feet of Andronicus. Terentianus, seeing the rage of the governor, and trembling for himself, immediately ordered a most furious lioness to be let out. At the sight of her all the spectators turned pale, and her terrible roarings made the bravest men tremble on their safe seats; yet, when she came up to the saints, who lay stretched on the sand, she laid herself down at the feet of St Tarachus, and licked them, quite forgetting her natural ferocity. Maximus, foaming with rage, commanded her to be pricked with goads. She then arose and raged about in a furious manner, roaring terribly, and affrighting all the spectators who, seeing that she had broken down part of the door of her lodge, which the governor had ordered to be shut, cried out earnestly that she might be again driven into her lodge. The governor, therefore, called for the confectors, or gladiators, to dispatch the martyrs with their swords, which they did. Maximus commanded the bodies to

be intermixed with those of the gladiators who had been slain, and also to be guarded that night by six soldiers, lest the Christians should carry them off. The night was very dark, and a violent storm of thunder and rain dispersed the guards. The faithful distinguished the three bodies by a miraculous star or ray of light which streamed on each of them. They carried off the precious treasures on their backs, and hid them in a hollow cave in the neighbouring mountains, where the governor was not able, by any search he could make, to find them. He severely chastised the guards who had abandoned their station. Three fervent Christians, Marcian, Felix, and Verus, retired into this cave of the rock, being resolved to spend there all the remainder of their lives. The governor left Anazarbus three days after. The Christians of that city sent this relation to the church of Iconium, desiring it might be communicated to the faithful of Pisidia and Pamphylia for their edification. The three martyrs finished their glorious course on the 11th of October, on which day their names occur in the Roman and other Martyrologies.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 11 :*

In the English dioceses THE MOTHERHOOD OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN : ST ETHELBURGE or EDELBIRGE, Abbess of Barking in Essex, an English Saxon princess, sister to St Erconwald, Bishop of London : ST CANICE, CANICUS, or KENNY, connected by holy friendship with St Columkille, patron of Kilkenny (Church of Kenny), a disciple of St Finian ; he founded the monastery of Achadbho or " Ox's Field " and died in 599 : ST GUMMAR, called GOMER by the French, who preserved his innocence at the Court of King Pepin, making it his study never to give the least trouble or do the least prejudice to anyone and to serve and do good, as much as lay in his power, to all men : ST JOHN LEONARDI, founder of the Clerks Regular of the Mother of God : ST TARACHUS, ST PROBUS, and ST ANDRONICUS, who died gloriously about the year 304 under Diocletian in Cilicia, when the edicts against the Christians were extended to all the laity without exception. Tarachus was of Rome, Probus of Pamphilia, and Andronicus of Ephesus.

## OCTOBER 12

### ST WILFRID, BISHOP OF YORK, CONFESSOR

(A.D. 709)

[From his life wrote by Eddi Stephani, precentor of the church of Canterbury, in the same age, prior to Bede, ap. Mabill. Act. Ben. t. iii. p. 170 ; t. v. p. 676. Bede, Hist. lib. iii. c. 25, &c. Also Fredegodus, by order of St Odo, of Canterbury, and Eadmer, secretary to St Anselm, wrote his life. Among the moderns Mr Peck has compiled his life at large in his history of Stamford, lib. ii. See also Johnson's Collection of English Canons, and Mr Smith's App. in Bedam, n. 18, 19 ; his life in the English-Saxon language, MSS. Bibl. Cotton. Julius, A. X.]

ST WILFRID, in English-Saxon Willferder, to whose zealous labours several churches, both in our island and abroad, were indebted for their conversion to Christ, was born in the kingdom of Northumberland towards the year 634. At fourteen years of age he was sent to the monastery of Lindisfarne that he might be trained up in the study of the sacred sciences, in which he discovered an application, penetration, and maturity of judgment beyond his years. A desire of greater improvement than he could attain to in that house, where he perceived the discipline that was practised to be imperfect, put him upon a project of travelling into France and Italy.

He made some stay at Canterbury, where he studied the Roman discipline, and learned the psalter according to the Roman version, instead of that of St Jerom, which he had used before. In 653, according to Mr Smith, St Bennet Biscop, his countryman, passed through Kent on his first journey to Rome; and St Wilfrid, who had set out with the same design, crossed the seas with him, but with an intention to visit the most famous monasteries in his way, the better to instruct himself in the rules of Christian perfection. At Lyons they were detained a whole year by St Delphinus, surnamed Annemund, archbishop of that city, who conceived so great an affection for Wilfrid that he offered him his niece in marriage and promised to procure him a considerable employment; but the saint continued steadfast in the resolution he had taken to devote himself to God, and proceeded on his journey the year following. At Rome he devoutly visited every day the tombs of the martyrs, and contracted a friendship with Boniface, the archdeacon, who was a very pious and a very learned man; he was secretary to the holy pope St Martin, and took as much delight in instructing young Wilfrid as if he had been his own child. He carefully explained to him the four gospels, and the right calculation of Easter against the erroneous practice of the Britons and Irish; likewise the other rules of ecclesiastical discipline. At length he presented him to the pope, who gave him his blessing by the imposition of his hands and prayer. After this Wilfrid left Rome, from whence he brought relics, and returned to Lyons to the archbishop, whom he revered as his father. He stayed three years at Lyons, and received the ecclesiastical tonsure from St Delphinus, who desired to make him his heir; but was put to death at Challons upon the Saone by the order of Ebroin, in 658. He is honoured at Lyons as a martyr on the 29th of September, being commonly called St Chaumont. Wilfrid accompanied him to the place of execution, and would have been glad to have died for him or with him. After he had interred his spiritual father, he returned into England loaded with relics.

Alcfrid, natural son of Oswi, who at that time reigned over the Deiri (his father contenting himself with Bernicia), being informed that Wilfrid had been instructed in the discipline of the Roman church, sent for him, and after he had discoursed with him, he conjured him to continue with him, to instruct him and his people in ecclesiastical discipline. This St Wilfrid consented to, and the prince gave him land at Rippon to found a monastery upon. Agilbert, Bishop of the West-Saxons, coming to pay a visit to King Oswi and his son, Alcfrid entreated him to ordain Wilfrid priest, that he might remain always near his person. Agilbert said that a person of such merit ought to be promoted to a bishopric; and ordained him priest in 663 in the monastery of Ripon. King Alcfrid desired to have his own priest Wilfrid placed in the episcopal see, and sent him into France to receive consecration at the hands of his old friend Agilbert, who,

seeing his diocese of West-Sex divided, and another bishop named Wina placed at Venta, called by the Saxons Wintacestir, now Winchester, returned to France, which was his native country, where the bishopric of Paris was given him. Wilfrid being absent a long time on this journey, Oswi caused St Ceadda, or Chad, abbot of Lestingau, a disciple of St Aiden, to be ordained bishop. The see of Canterbury being vacant by the death of Deusdedit, he was consecrated by Wina, Bishop of Winchester, who was the only bishop at that time in Great Britain that had been canonically ordained. Agilbert joyfully received Wilfrid, and, with twelve other bishops, performed the ceremony of his ordination with great solemnity at Compiègne. St Wilfrid was then in the thirtieth year of his age, in 664; he was carried by the bishops in a golden chair, according to the custom of the Gauls.

At his return into England he would not dispute the election of St Chad; but retired to Ripon, which monastery he made his residence for three years, though he was often called into Mercia by King Wulfere to ordain deacons and priests, and to perform other episcopal functions. St Theodorus, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his visitation, found the election of St Chad to have been irregular, and removed him; but, charmed with his humility and virtue, placed him in the see of Litchfield. At the same time he put St Wilfrid in possession of the see of York, in 669, before the death of Oswi, which happened in 670. Upon his demise, Alcfrid was obliged by the people to leave the throne to Egfrid, the eldest legitimate son of Oswi. St Wilfrid consecrated the great Church of St Peter, which he had built at Rippon, in presence of the new king, in 670, and afterwards that of St Andrew, at Hexham, and several others. Being a man of most persuasive oratory and strict virtue, he promoted everywhere religion and piety with incredible success. He invited out of Kent the precentor, Eddi Stephani, who became from that time his constant companion, and afterwards wrote his life. The monastic state was a principal object of St Wilfrid's care; and this he settled among the Midland and Northern English, as St Austin had established it in Kent.

King Egfrid had taken to wife St Audry, who, preferring a religious life, according to the liberty which the church has always understood, by constant tradition, to be allowed by the divine law before cohabitation, St Wilfrid endeavoured at first to engage her to change her resolution, but, finding her inflexible in it, at length consented to give her the veil. This action exceedingly provoked the king, and his new queen, Ermenberga, employed every base and little means entirely to ruin him in the opinion of her husband. In order to undermine him, a project was set on foot for dividing his bishopric, after the holy prelate had spent ten years in settling Christianity in it. Theodorus, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and metropolitan of all England, was gained by specious pretences, and

parcelled his great diocese, consecrating Bosa to the see of York, for the Deiri; Eata to that of Lindisfarne, for Bernicia; and Eadhed to the church of Lindissi, or great part of Lincolnshire, which Egfrid had won from Mercia. This passed in the year 678. Eadhed resided first at Sidnacester, near Gainsborough; but after King Wulfere had recovered Lindsey and all Lincolnshire he retired to Ripon. Wilfrid, for opposing this partition, was rejected; but appealed to the pope. Dreading a disturbance or schism, he raised no clamour, but being too well versed in the canons not to see the irregularity and nullity of many steps that had been taken against him, embarked for Rome. Being driven by contrary winds at sea upon the coast of Friesland, he was moved to compassion upon seeing the spiritual blindness and idolatry of the inhabitants, and preached the faith to them. During that winter and the following spring he stayed among them, converted and baptized many thousands, with several lords of the country. Wilfrid is honoured to this day as the apostle of that country.

Next summer, Wilfrid, leaving his new converts with great reluctance under the direction of proper pastors, travelled through Austrasia, where King Dagobert II entertained him most honourably, and entreated him to fill the bishopric of Strasburg, which happened then to be vacant. Upon his refusal, this prince made him very considerable presents, and sent Adeodatus, Bishop of Toul, to accompany him to Rome, where he arrived late in the year 679. He found Pope Agatho already apprized of what had passed in England, by a monk, whom Theodorus had dispatched on his side with letters. The pope was preparing to hold a great council against the Monothelites. In the meantime, to discuss this cause, he assembled a synod in October 679 in the Lateran basilic, or Church of our Saviour, consisting of above fifty bishops and priests. The cause of the dissension in the British church having been weighed, it was decreed, by the authority of St Peter, that there should be in it one archbishop honoured with the pall, who should promote and canonically ordain the bishops to the other sees; but that none of the bishops should presume to meddle with the rights of any other prelate, but all should study to instruct and convert the people. After this, St Wilfrid was admitted to the council. Having presented his petition in person to the pope and bishops assembled, the synod exceedingly commended his moderation, in that he had raised no disturbance or resistance by contumacy but had been content calmly to enter his protestation and appeals, professing that he would submit to whatever was determined; and it was definitively decreed that he should be restored to his bishopric. St Wilfrid stayed above four months at Rome, and assisted at the great Lateran council of one hundred and twenty-five bishops, in which he, with the rest, condemned the Monothelite heresy. When he arrived in England he repaired to the king and showed him the

sealed decrees of the pope. The prince, when he had first caused them to be read to the prelates of his own faction that were in the room with him, cried out they had been obtained by bribery, and commanded a certain reeve (or steward of the church for secular affairs) to commit Wilfrid to prison, where he was detained nine months. They took from him everything but the clothes which he then wore, and sent his attendants some one way, and some another. Queen Ermenberga took away his case of relics, which she hung up in her chamber, and carried about with her in her chariot when she went out. The holy bishop's guards heard him sing psalms in his dark dungeon, and beheld a light which terrified them; and the saint having cured the governor's wife with holy water, he refused to guard him any longer, and the king ordered him to be removed to another prison. At length the queen was seized with a sudden fit of sickness in a monastery, the abbess whereof (who was Ebba, the king's aunt) represented to her the injustice done to St Wilfrid; whereupon he was set at liberty, his relics were restored, and his companions were sent back to him.

St Wilfrid, who was inflamed with an ardent zeal for the conversion of infidels and the salvation of souls, repaired to the kingdom of the South Saxons, which had not yet received the light of faith. Edilwalch, the king, who had been lately baptized in Mercia, where King Wulfere was his godfather, received him with open arms; and the saint, by his preaching, converted the whole nation, with all the priests of the idols. That country was oppressed with a dreadful famine, no rain having fallen there for three years. But on the day on which St Wilfrid first administered baptism with great solemnity to an incredible number of the nobility and people, abundant rains fell. The saint also taught the people to fish, which was a great relief to them. In the first essay they caught three hundred fishes, of which the saint induced them to give one hundred to the poor and as many to those of whom they had borrowed their nets, keeping the like number for their own use. The king gave him land of eighty-seven families, on which he built two monasteries, Bosenham and Selsey, that is, Isle of the Sea-Calf. The saint chiefly resided in the peninsula of Selsey and cultivated this vineyard five years, till upon the death of King Egfrid, he was called back into Northumberland. That prince was slain in battle by the Picts, whose country he had invaded in 685. As he left no issue, Alcfrid, his natural brother, was sent for out of Ireland, whither he had retired, and a second time mounted the throne. St Theodorus, being above fourscore years of age and seized with frequent fits of sickness, sent to St Wilfrid, requesting that he would meet him at London, with Erchambald, bishop of that city. He confessed to them all the actions of his life; then said to St Wilfrid, "The greatest remorse that I feel is, that I consented with the king to deprive you of your possessions, without any fault committed on your part. I confess this, my crime, to God and

St Peter; and I take them both to witness that I will do all that lies in my power to make amends for my fault, and to reconcile you to all the kings and lords who are my friends. God hath revealed to me that I shall not live to the end of this year. I conjure you to consent that I may establish you in my lifetime archbishop of my see." St Wilfrid replied, "May God and St Peter pardon you all our differences: I will always pray for you as your friend. Send letters to your friends that they may restore to me part of my possessions, according to the decree of the holy see. The choice of a successor in your see will be afterwards considered in a proper assembly." Pursuant to this engagement, St Theodorus wrote to King Alcfrid, to Ethelred, King of the Mercians, to Elfleda, who had succeeded St Hilda in the abbey of Streaneshalch, and others. Alcfrid, having received these letters, recalled the holy bishop in the second year of his reign, towards the end of the year 686, and restored to him, first, his monastery of Hexham, and soon after that of Ripon and the episcopal see of York—Bosa of York, and St John of Beverley, at Hexham, relinquishing their sees to him.

St Wilfrid, after his restoration, reduced Hexham and Ripon to their original condition of mere monasteries; and St Cuthbert, who had from the beginning sustained the episcopal charge only in obedience and by compulsion, retired to Farne upon St Wilfrid's return, and died there the following year, 687; so that St Wilfrid was obliged to take upon him the care also of the diocese of Lindisfarne till a new bishop could be chosen. King Alcfrid would have a new bishopric elected at Ripon; St Wilfrid opposed the project, and was obliged once more to fly, in 691, five years after he had been restored. He retired to Ethelred, King of the Mercians, who received him most graciously, and entreated him to take upon himself the care of the see of Litchfield, which was then vacant. The good bishop's discourses on the vanity of the world, and the infinite importance of salvation, made such an impression on the king that, in hopes more easily to secure a happy eternity, he soon after relinquished his crown and put on the monastic habit. Our saint founded many monasteries and churches in Mercia, and usefully employed there his labours; till, finding his enemies in Northumberland had gained Brithwald, Archbishop of Canterbury, and were soliciting a sentence of deposition against him, he appealed a second time to Rome, and took another journey thither in 703. His accusers appeared there against him, but to their own confusion. Pope John VI honourably acquitted the saint, who had in everything proceeded according to the canons. His very enemies had always acknowledged his life to be irreproachable; and a bishop cannot be deposed unless a canonical fault be proved against him in a synod. How pure his views were, and how remote from avarice and ambition, appeared from his charity towards his persecutors, the meekness with which he maintained the rights of his see,

and the discipline of the church, and the humility and disinterestedness with which he refused the bishopric of the Mercians, and excused himself from acquiescing in the earnest request of St Theodorus when he desired to make him his coadjutor in the metropolitanical see of Canterbury. If he was rich, he knew no other use of what he possessed than to employ it in the foundation of churches and in the relief of the poor. Such a character appeared in the most shining light to all impartial judges, and St Wilfrid met at Rome with that protection and applause which were due to his heroic virtue. Pope John VI, in 704, sent letters<sup>1</sup> by an express messenger to the kings of Mercia and Northumberland in favour of the persecuted bishop, charging Archbishop Brithwald to call a synod which should do him justice; in default of which he ordered the parties to make their personal appearance at Rome.

St Wilfrid, in his return, was taken dangerously ill at Meaux, in France; under which distemper Bede relates<sup>2</sup> that he was assured, by a heavenly vision, that Christ, through the intercession of his mother, the Holy Virgin Mary, and at the prayers of his friends, had prolonged his life four years. When he landed in England, Archbishop Brithwald promised him heartily to concur to his restoration to his former see. Ethelred, the late king of Mercia, then abbot of Bardney, received him with great joy, and warmly recommended him to his nephew Coënnred, to whom he had resigned his crown when he forsook the world. Alcfred, King of Northumberland, yet made difficulties; but died in 705, and, in his last sickness, repented of the injustice he had done to St Wilfrid, as his sister Elfleda, abbess of Streaneshalch, gave testimony. His restitution, therefore, was easily agreed to by the whole kingdom under Osred, who, being only eight years old, succeeded his father, Brithric being regent during his minority. St Wilfrid took possession of the diocese of Hexham, but chiefly resided in his monastery of Ripon, leaving York to St John of Beverley. He governed the monasteries in Mercia, of which he had been the founder, and which were afterwards destroyed by the Danes. He died at one of these at Undalum, now called Oundle, in Northamptonshire, on the 24th of April 709, having divided his treasures between his monasteries, churches, and the former companions of his exile. His body was buried in his Church of St Peter at Ripon. That monastery having been destroyed by the wars, the greatest part of his remains were translated to Canterbury in the time of St Odo, and deposited under the high altar in 959. They were enshrined by Lanfranc, and deposited on the north side of the altar by St Anselm, on the 12th of October; the day of which translation became his principal festival. These relics are said now to repose near the monument of that truly great man, Cardinal Pole.

<sup>1</sup> Extant in Spelman, pp. 179 and 204; but in the latter place falsely ascribed to Pope John VII as if it were a different letter.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. lib. v. c. 19.



True virtue is always of a piece with itself, is always governed by the same principle, and always steers the same course. In prosperity it is humble, modest, and timorous; in adversity, magnanimous, and equally active and brave. To suffer from good men is often the severest of trials; but from whatever quarter persecution comes, it is our duty not to sink under it, but, sincerely humbling ourselves before both God and man, we must not be daunted, considering that on one side it is the part of cowards only to be pusillanimous or to despair; and, on the other, it is arrogance and pride to fall into impatience, or to repay injuries with revenge, insults, or ill-will.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 12 :*

ST SALVINUS, Bishop of Verona : ST WILFRID, born 634, brought up at Lindisfarne ; accompanied St Bennet Biscop to Rome ; being made Bishop of York, he met with many trials from the Celtic clergy ; died while visiting Oundle, near Northampton ; his body was later translated to Canterbury.

OCTOBER 13

ST EDWARD, KING AND CONFESSOR

(A.D. 1066)

[From William of Malmesbury (*de Reg. Angl.* 2, c. 13), whom Sir H. Saville calls the best historian of our nation, and who wrote in 1140 ; Matthew of Westminster, or whoever compiled the *Flores Hist. Angl.* from Matthew Paris, &c. ; the life of St Edward, C., wrote by St Aëlred, Abbot of Rievall. An accurate account of his death is given by Sulcard, a monk of Westminster, in the reign of the Conqueror. See also Ingulphus, published by Gale, Brompton by Twysden, Knyghton, *ibid.* ; Hoveden and Matt. Paris, *ad ann.* 1066 ; Harpsfield, *Sæc.* xi. c. 3 ; likewise the historians of Normandy, Odericus Vitalis in *Hist. Normann.* ; Gulielmus Pictav. de *Gestis Gul. Ducis*, &c. The Letter of Innocent II on the Canoniz. of St Edward, *ann.* 1138, *ap. Wilk. Conc. Br. t. i. p.* 419 ; the bull of Alexander III, *ibid.* p. 434 ; that of Greg. IX in 1227 ; and Rymer's *Fœdera*, t. i. p. 297.]

God often gives bad princes in his wrath, but in a good king he bestoweth a great public blessing on a nation. The happiness of the reign of St Edward the Confessor is itself a panegyric of his virtue. This prince was son of King Ethelred II, who left by Elgiva, his first wife, Edmund Ironside, who was his successor ; and, by his second wife, Emma, daughter to Richard I and sister to Richard II, the third and fourth dukes of Normandy, he had Alfred and Edward.

St Edward was nursed in the wholesome school of adversity, the mistress of all virtues to those who make a right use of it. Though educated in the palace of the Duke of Normandy, he was always an enemy to vanity, pleasure, and pride ; so diligently did he fortify his mind against the contagion of a court in which these vices reigned. The arms by which he triumphed over them were, at the same time, the means by which he grounded his heart in the rooted habits of the contrary virtues. From his infancy it was his delight to pray much, to assist as often as possible at the divine sacrifice of the altar, to visit churches and monasteries, and converse with the most holy and perfect among the servants of God. He was modest in his comportment and sparing in his words ; not out



SAINT EDWARDUS  
Rex Angliae

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(7) ST. EDWARDUS, Rex ANGLIAE

Edward was both king and saint. During the reign of this peace-loving monarch England prospered and her people were happy. He founded monasteries, abolished unfair taxes, and cared for the poor and sick. All his laws were wise and just, and out of respect to his memory, at coronations a crown bearing his name is used.

of ignorance or slowness of parts, for all historians assure us that in wisdom and gravity he much surpassed his years; but out of sincere humility, love of recollection, and just apprehension of the snares and dangers of too great forwardness and volubility of speech. His character from his youth was the aggregate of all Christian and moral virtues; but that which particularly distinguished him was an incomparable mildness and sweetness of temper, the fruit of the most sincere humility and tender universal charity. By this test of genuine virtue, and mark of the spirit of our divine Redeemer, it manifestly appeared how perfectly the saint was dead to himself. Ambition could find no place in a heart crucified to the world, and to all the false interests of the passions. A man must be grounded in perfect humility, and has need of an extraordinary strength and grace, to bear the weight of honour and not suffer his heart to cleave to it. The height of dignity exposes souls to great dangers, as the highest trees are assailed by the greatest storms; so that a much greater virtue is required to command than to obey; and a Christian ought to learn from the example which Christ has set us that it is often the safest way to endeavour to fly such posts; and that no one ought to receive a place of honour without being well assured that it is the will of God that calls him to it, and without being resolved to live upon that pinnacle always in fear and trembling, by having constantly the weight of his obligations, and the fear of the divine judgments, before his eyes. Those who open a door to any secret ambition in their hearts are justly abandoned by God, who says of them, "The kings have reigned, but not by me: they have been princes, and I knew it not."<sup>1</sup> St Edward was called to the crown by the right door, and placed by God on the throne of his ancestors, and had no views but to the advancement of the divine honour and to the comfort and relief of a distressed people. So far was he from the least spark of ambition that he declared he would by no means accept the greatest monarchy if it were to cost the blood of a single man. With the incredible joy of the whole kingdom he was anointed and crowned on Easter-day, in 1042, being about forty years old.

Though he ascended the throne in the most difficult times of distraction and commotions, both foreign and domestic, and by his piety and simplicity might seem fitter for a cloister than such a crown, yet never was any reign more happy. The very Danes that were settled in England loved, respected, and feared his name; and to him it was owing that though they had looked upon England as their own, by a pretended right of conquest, and though they were so numerous as to be able to hold the whole nation in the most barbarous subjection for forty years past, and filled the kingdoms of Northumberland, Mercia, and the East-Angles with their colonies; yet they made not the least opposition or disturbance, and from that time were never more mentioned in England. It is certain, from the silence

<sup>1</sup> Ose. viii. 4.

of all our historians, that no massacre was made of them by the English in the reign of St Edward, as Pontanus, the Danish historian, pretends. Such an attempt could not but have been as dangerous as it would have been barbarous and unjust; and must have made a much greater noise than that which happened under Ethelred II, when their power and numbers were much less.

The only war the saint ever undertook was to restore Malcolm, King of Scotland, to which a glorious victory immediately put an end. At home, Earl Godwin and some other ambitious spirits complained he kept several Normans, whom he had brought over with him, about his person. But the holy king, with great prudence, brought them to reason, or obliged them to leave his dominions for a time, without bloodshed; so that the little clouds which began to gather in his time were immediately scattered without embroiling the state: a sensible proof how formidable the affection of a whole people renders a prince, and how great a happiness it is to a nation when a king who is truly the father of his subjects reigns in their hearts. The example of St Edward's virtues had a powerful influence over many that were about his person, in teaching them to curb their passions. His own royal patrimony sufficed for all. At that time kings had their estates; taxes were not raised except in time of war or on other extraordinary emergencies. St Edward never found himself under any necessity of having recourse to such burdensome methods. He remitted the Dane-gelt, which in his father's time had been paid to the Danish fleet, and had been ever after paid into the royal exchequer. On a certain occasion, the lords of the kingdom understanding that the king's exchequer had been exhausted by his excessive alms, raised upon their vassals a large sum, unknown to him, and one Christmas begged his majesty to accept that free present of his grateful subjects to clothe his soldiers and defray other public expenses. St Edward, surprised to see such a heap of money gathered into his exchequer, returned his thanks to his affectionate subjects, but expressed a great abhorrence of what he called a pillaging of the poor, and commanded that it should be returned, every farthing, to those that had given it. His great alms and actions of pious liberality showed what the sole retrenching of luxury and superfluity may do. His whole deportment showed how much he was master of himself. He was never morose, never appeared transported with anger, puffed up with vanity, or fond of pleasure. His conversation was agreeable, and accompanied with a certain majesty, and he delighted much to speak of God and spiritual things.

St Edward had conceived from his youth the greatest esteem and love for the precious treasure of purity, and preserved this virtue both in mind and body without stain. St Aëlred testifies that, in his youth, through the warmth of his constitution, the subtle artifices of the devil, and the

liberties of a court in which he lived a stranger, he sustained violent assaults; but resisted this enemy so manfully that in all his battles he was gloriously triumphant. Humility, a life of prayer and mortification, a diligent flight of all dangerous occasions, and the practice of all manner of good works were the weapons by which he diligently armed himself against these temptations. He watched all the avenues of his soul, keeping his eyes and his other senses under the strictest restraint that they should never steal any unguarded glances or other dangerous liberties; and he shunned all superfluous converse with persons of the other sex, from which at least the secret corners of the heart contract something which impairs that perfection of purity by which the affections are entirely shut up against all creatures and rendered fit to invite the embraces of the heavenly spouse. His triumph seemed, by rooted victorious habits both of purity and of humility, and those other virtues by which it is preserved, to be become easy and secure, when, being placed on the throne, he was entreated both by his nobility and people to take a royal consort. Earl Godwin, whose immoderate power and wealth seemed to raise him above the level of his fellow subjects, moved every engine to make the choice fall upon his daughter Edgitha, a lady totally unlike her father, being most remarkably virtuous and abstemious; for beauty, understanding, and all accomplishments, she was the miracle of her sex. Edward, seeing that reading, studying, and devotion were her whole delight, hoped she would be easily engaged to become his wife upon condition always to live in holy virginity, in imitation of the mother of God and St Joseph; it not being in his power otherwise to marry, he having long ago consecrated himself to God by a vow of perpetual chastity, as St Aëlred assures us. The good king earnestly recommended the matter to God, joining much fasting and almsdeeds to devout prayer, before he disclosed his purpose to the virgin. She readily assented to his religious desire, so that, being joined together in holy wedlock, they always lived as brother and sister, and their example was afterwards imitated by St Henry and St Elzear.

Many actions of kings, in public trials and certain affairs of state, are rather the actions of their council than their own. This is sometimes necessary that no room be left to suspect that scandalous public crimes are by an unjust connivance passed over with impunity, or that any essential part of the duties and protection which a prince owes his people is neglected. This accounts, in some measure, for the good king's behaviour towards his mother in the famous trial which she underwent. The fact is related by Brompton,<sup>1</sup> Knyghton,<sup>2</sup> Harpsfield, and others, though no mention is made of it by Ingulphus or any others who lived nearest the time. Certain wicked men who desired to engross alone the confidence of the king, and the entire administration of the government, set their wits to work to invent some

<sup>1</sup> Chron. inter 10 Scriptor.

<sup>2</sup> De Eventibus Angliæ, ibid. t. ii. p. 2329.

wicked plot for ruining the queen-mother in the opinion of the king. Queen Emma often saw Alwin, the pious Bishop of Winchester, by whose advice she governed her conscience. She was therefore accused of having had criminal conversation with him. Her chastity must have been very perfect and very wary that calumny itself could find no other but so holy a man to fasten upon. Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, formerly abbot of Jumiege, whom Edward had brought over with him from Normandy, was drawn into a persuasion of her guilt. Her enemies loaded her, moreover, with invectives and accusations for having consented, not only to marry Canute, the enemy of her former husband's family, but also to have favoured Hardicanute, to the prejudice of the right of her children by her first husband, and of the whole Saxon line, to whose exclusion from all share in the kingdom she consented in the articles of this second marriage, agreeing that the crown of all England should be settled on her issue by Canute; though Canute himself altered this settlement by will, so far as to leave only Denmark to Hardicanute and England to Harold, whom he had by a former wife or concubine; for he looked upon his possession of England as founded in the right of conquest. But Canute's possession, especially of West-Sex (under which name was then comprised also Sussex and whatever lying on the south side of the Thames was, by Canute's partition, left to the English-Saxons), was an unjust usurpation; and for Emma voluntarily to concur to the exclusion of the rightful heirs was an inexcusable and unnatural step, for which only her repentance could atone. To this charge, however, Edward seemed altogether insensible; and perhaps never was any man more remarkably so, even towards strangers, with regard to private or personal injuries. The accusation of sacrilege and incontineny disturbed him, and filled him with horror and grief beyond measure, being, on the one side, unwilling to believe so atrocious a crime, and, on the other, afraid at conniving at such a scandal. He therefore suffered the bishops to take cognizance of the cause in an assembly which they held at Winchester; and, in the meantime, the bishop was confined in that city and Emma in the royal nunnery of Warewell, in Hampshire. In the synod several bishops wished, to the king's great satisfaction, that the cause might be dropped; but the Archbishop of Canterbury insisted so warmly on the enormity of the scandal, and the necessity and obligation of penance and a public reparation, that the synod was worked up to the severest resolutions. The injured queen could only have recourse to God, like another Susanna, against the malice of her perjured accusers, and, in proof of her innocence, trusting in him who is the protector of the oppressed, offered herself to the trial of ordeal. Accordingly, after the night had been spent in imploring the divine protection through the intercession of St Swithin, Queen Emma walked blindfold and barefoot over nine red-hot ploughshares, laid in St Swithin's Church,

in Winchester, without receiving the least hurt, so that when she was gone over them she asked how far she was from her purgation. Upon which her eyes were uncovered, and looking behind her upon the ploughshares which she had passed over, she burst into praises of God for her wonderful deliverance.<sup>1</sup> The king, who, anxious for the event, had not ceased all this while earnestly to recommend it to God, seeing this testimony of heaven in favour of the innocence of his dear mother, full of gratitude to her deliverer, cast himself at her feet, begged pardon for his fault of credulity, and in satisfaction received the discipline from two bishops who were present. In acknowledgment for this miraculous favour he bestowed on the Church of St Swithin, at Winchester, the isle of Portland and three manors; Queen Emma gave to it nine manors, and Bishop Alwin nine others, according to the number of ploughshares, which were kept as a memorial in that monastery. The Archbishop Robert returned to Normandy, and retired to his monastery of Jumiege, after having first, in penance, performed a pilgrimage to St Peter's tomb at Rome. The king commanded all his mother's goods and estates which had been seized to be restored to her. She afterwards died at Winchester in 1052.

The following year was remarkable for the death of Earl Godwin, who fell down dead whilst he was at supper with the king at Winchester,<sup>2</sup> or, according to Brompton, at Windsor, in 1053. Ralph of Disse, Brompton, and others say that, thinking the king still harboured a suspicion of his having been the contriver of his brother Alfred's death, he wished that if he was guilty he might never swallow a morsel of meat which he was putting into his mouth; and that he was choked with it. This circumstance, however, is not mentioned by Ingulf, who wrote soon after. Harold succeeded his father Godwin in the earldom of Kent and in his other dignities. Griffith, Prince of South Wales, having made inroads into Herefordshire, the king ordered Harold to curb him, which he executed. This Griffith some years after was taken prisoner and put to death by Griffith-ap-Shewelyn, King or Prince of North Wales, who sent his head to Harold, and presents to King Edward, who was so generous as to bestow the kingdom of the former, which his troops had conquered, on the late prince's two brothers, Blechgent and Rithwalag, who swore allegiance to Edward. In 1058 the king suffered a great loss by the death of the pious and most valiant Earl Siward. So great was this soldier's passion for arms that in his agony he regretted as a misfortune his dying on his bed, and calling for his armour, expired as soon as he had it on. The death of Siward was followed by that of Leofric, who was the most prudent and religious counsellor of St Edward, being for his wisdom the Nestor of his age, and by his piety a perfect model of Christian perfection.

<sup>1</sup> Brompton, Knyghton, Tho. Rudborne, &c. See Harpsfield, Parker, in vit. Roberti archiep. Alford ad ann. 1047.

<sup>2</sup> Ralph of Disse, in Chron. p. 476, &c.

The exemptions and privileges which his pious and charitable lady, Godiva, obtained of him for the city of Coventry have commended their memory to the latest posterity in those parts. In the pious and wise counsels of this great man, St Edward, who most frequently resided at Islip, found his greatest comfort and support. His son Alfgar was made Duke of Mercia, but fell short of his father's reputation.

The laws framed by St Edward were the fruit of his wisdom and that of his counsellors. They are still in force as part of the common law of England, unless in things altered by later statutes: they consisted in short positive precepts, in which judges kept close to the words of the law, being not reasoned away either by the judges or advocates, says Mr Gurdon. In them punishments were very mild; scarce any crimes were capital, and amercements and fines were certain, determined by the laws, not inflicted at the will and pleasure of the judges. The public peace and tranquillity were maintained, and everyone's private property secured; not by the rigour of the laws, but by the severity and diligence with which they were executed and justice administered. Whence Mr Gurdon says,<sup>1</sup> "This king's religious and just administration was as much or more valued by the people than the text of the laws." It is the remark of the same ingenious author in another place,<sup>2</sup> "Edward the Confessor, that great and good legislator, reigned in the hearts of his people. The love, harmony, and good agreement between him and the great council of the nation produced such a happiness as to be the measure of the people's desires in all succeeding reigns; the law and government of King Edward being petitioned for, and strenuously contended for, by the English and Norman barons." The saint's historians relate, as an instance of his extreme lenity and goodness, that as he seemed one day asleep in his chamber he saw a servant boy come twice and steal a considerable quantity of money out of a great sum which Hugoline, the keeper of his privy purse, had left exposed; and that when the boy came a third time he only bade him take care, for Hugoline was coming, who, if he caught him, would have him severely whipped and he would lose his booty. When Hugoline came in and burst into a rage for the loss, the king bade him be easy, for the person who had taken the money wanted it more than they did. Some moderns censure this action. But we must observe that the king doubtless took all care that the thief should be made sensible of his sin, and did not imagine he would return to the theft; also that he regarded it merely as a personal injury, which he was always ready to forgive; and that this single private instance of such a pardon was not imprudent or would have any influence on the administration of public justice. Saints are always inclined to pardon personal injuries; and in these cases easily persuade themselves that lenity may be used without offending against prudence. William the

<sup>1</sup> History of the Parliament, t. i. p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 37.



Bastard, Duke of Normandy, came into England to pay a visit to the king his cousin in 1052, the year before Godwin's death.

St Edward during his exile in Normandy had made a vow to perform a pilgrimage to St Peter's tomb at Rome, if God should be pleased ever to put an end to the misfortunes of his family. When he was settled on the throne he began to prepare suitable gifts and offerings to make to the altar of the apostle, and to put things in order for his journey. For this purpose he held a great council, in which he declared his vow and the obligation he lay under of returning thanks, in the best manner he was able, to the divine clemency, propounded the best methods to be taken for securing commerce and the public peace, and affectionately commended all his dear subjects to the divine mercy and protection. The whole assembly of the governors and chief men of the provinces made strong expostulations against his design. They commended his devotion, but with tears represented to him that the kingdom would be left exposed to domestic divisions and to foreign enemies; and had already before their eyes slaughters, civil wars, armies of fierce Danes, and every other calamity. The king was moved by their entreaties and reasons, and consented that the matter should be referred to Leo IX, who then sat in St Peter's chair. Aëlred, Archbishop of York, and Herman, Bishop of Winchester, with two abbots, were dispatched to Rome on this errand. The pope, considering the impossibility of the king's leaving his dominions exposed to such grievous dangers and calamities, dispensed with his vow upon condition that, by way of commutation, he should give to the poor the sum he would have expended in his journey, and should moreover build or repair and endow a monastery in honour of St Peter. King Edward having received this brief, after due deliberation pitched upon a spot where to erect this royal abbey. Sebert, King of the East-Angles, nephew to St Ethelbert, upon his conversion founded the Cathedral of St Paul's in London, and also, according to Sulcard, without the walls on the west of that city a monastery in honour of St Peter, called Thorney, where a temple of Apollo is said to have stood in the time of the Romans, and to have been thrown down by an earthquake. St Edward, invited by the situation and other circumstances, repaired and endowed the same in a most magnificent manner out of his own patrimony, and obtained of Pope Nicholas II the most ample exemptions and privileges for it, dated in 1059. From its situation it was called Westminster, and is famous for the coronation of our kings and the burial of great persons, and was at the dissolution the richest abbey in England. William of Malmesbury,<sup>1</sup> St Aëlred, Brompton, and others relate that St Edward, while he resided in a palace near this church, cured an Irishman named Gillemichel, who was entirely a cripple and was covered with running sores. The king carried him on

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iii. de Reg. c. 13.

his back and set him down sound, though Sulcard takes no notice of this miracle. The same historians mention that a certain woman had a swelling in her neck under her chin full of corruption and exhaling a noisome smell. Being admonished in a dream, she addressed herself to the king for his blessing. St Edward washed the ulcerous sore and blessed it with the sign of the cross; after which the sore burst and cleansed itself, and the patient was healed. Malmesbury adds that it was the constant report of such as well knew the life of Edward that he had healed many of the same disease whilst he lived in Normandy. Hence was derived the custom of our kings touching for the cure of that species of scrofulous tumour called the king's-evil.

King Edward resided sometimes at Winchester, sometimes at Windsor, or at London; but most ordinarily at Islip, in Oxfordshire, where he was born. Formerly noblemen lived on their estates amidst their tenants and vassals, and only repaired to court on certain great festivals or when called by the king upon extraordinary occasions. Christmas being one of the chief feasts on which the nobility waited on the king, St Edward, when the buildings were finished, chose that solemnity for the dedication of the new church at Westminster. The ceremony was performed with great devotion and the utmost pomp, the bishop and nobility of the whole kingdom assisting thereat, as Sulcard testifies. The king signed the charter of the foundation, and of the immunities and privileges granted to this church, to which were annexed the most dreadful spiritual comminations against those who should ever presume to infringe the same. Next to the prince of the apostles, this holy king had a singular devotion to St John Evangelist, the great model of holy purity and divine charity; and it is related in his life that he was forewarned by that glorious Evangelist of his approaching dissolution, in recompense of his religious devotion in never refusing any just and reasonable request that was made him for the sake or in the name of that saint. The pious king, by his munificent foundation, hoped to erect a standing monument of his zeal for the divine honour, and of his devotion to the holy apostle St Peter, and to establish a seminary of terrestrial angels, by whom a perpetual holocaust of divine praise and love might be paid to God when he should be no longer on earth to praise God here himself; also by the fervour of many pious servants of God he desired to supply the defects and imperfection of his own devotion in the divine love and service. In these dispositions, he sung with holy Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." Being taken ill before the ceremony of the dedication was over, he hastened the same, and continued to assist at it to the end. He then betook himself to his bed and, by the most perfect exercises of devotion and the sacraments of the church, prepared himself for his passage to eternity. In his last moments, seeing his nobles all

bathed in tears round his bed, and his affectionate and virtuous queen sobbing more vehemently and weeping more bitterly than the rest, he said to her with great tenderness, "Weep not, my dear daughter; I shall not die, but shall live. Departing from the land of the dying, I hope to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living."<sup>1</sup> Commending her to her brother Harold and certain other lords, he declared he left her an untouched virgin. He calmly expired on the 5th of January, in 1066, having reigned twenty-three years, six months, and twenty-seven days, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. In 1102 the body of St Edward was found entire, the limbs flexible, and the cloths fresh. Soon after, a certain Norman whose name was Ralph, and who was an entire cripple, recovered the use of his limbs by praying at his tomb, and six blind men were restored in like manner to their sight; which miracles, with some others, being duly proved, the saint was canonized by Alexander III in 1161, and his festival began to be kept on the 5th of January. Two years after, a solemn translation of his body (which was found incorrupt, and in the same condition as formerly) was performed by St Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, in presence of King Henry II and many persons of distinction, on the 13th of October; on which day his principal festival is now kept. Out of respect to the memory of St Edward, the kings of England to this day, at their coronation, receive his crown, and put on his dalmatic and maniple as part of the royal robes, though even the crown has been since changed, and now only bears St Edward's name, being made in imitation of his.

St Edward was a saint in the midst of a court and in a degenerate age. Such an example must convince us that for any to impute their want of a Christian spirit and virtue to the circumstances of their state or situation is a false and foolish pretence; a proof of which is, that if these were changed they would still remain the same persons. The fault lies altogether in their own sloth and passions. Temperance and mortification may be practised, the spirit of true devotion acquired, and all virtues exercised by the divine grace, even in an heroic degree, where a desire and resolution does not fall short. From obstacles and contradictions themselves the greatest advantages may be reaped; by them patience, meekness, humility, and charity are perfected, and the soul is continually awaked and quickened into a lively sense of her duty to God.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 13 :*

ST COLMAN, martyr, a Scot or an Irishman tortured and hanged near Vienna in 1012; many miracles attested his sanctity: ST COMGAN, Abbot, honoured in the dioceses of Scotland; said to have been the son of Cellach, King of Ireland; unjustly dethroned and banished, he fled to Scotland, where he became a monk; after his death his body was taken to Iona: ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR: ST FAUSTUS, ST JANUARIUS, and ST MARTIALIS, called "the three crowns of Cordova," martyred there in 304: SEVEN FRIARS MINOR, martyrs, who followed the five Franciscan missionaries, commemorated on January 16, to announce Christ to the Mahometans; their names were DANIEL, SAMUEL, ANGELUS, DONOLUS, LEO, NICHOLAS, and HUGOLIN: and ST GERALD, patron of Upper Auvergne, a virtuous nobleman born in 855.

<sup>1</sup> Brompton in Chronic. p. 950.

OCTOBER 14

## ST CALIXTUS, OR CALLISTUS, POPE, MARTYR

[See Tillemont, t. ii., from St Optatus, St Austin, and the Pontificals. Also Hist. des Emper. Moret, named by Benedict XIV Canon of St Calixtus's Church of St Mary beyond the Tiber, lib. de St Callisto ejusque Ecclesia St Mariæ Transtyberinæ, Romæ, 1753, folio, and Sandini, Vit. Pontif. p. 43.]

THE name of St Callistus is rendered famous by the ancient cemetery which he beautified, and which, for the great number of holy martyrs whose bodies were there deposited, was the most celebrated of all those about Rome. He was a Roman by birth, succeeded St Zephirin in the pontificate in 217 or 218, on the 2nd of August, and governed the church five years and two months, according to the true reading of the most ancient Pontifical, compiled from the registers of the Roman Church, as Henschenius, Papebroke, and Moret show, though Tillemont and Orsi give him only four years and some months. Antoninus Caracalla, who had been liberal to his soldiers, but the most barbarous murderer and oppressor of the people, having been massacred by a conspiracy raised by the contrivance of Macrinus, on the 8th of April 217, who assumed the purple, the empire was threatened on every side with commotions. Macrinus bestowed on infamous pleasures at Antioch that time which he owed to his own safety and to the tranquillity of the state, and gave an opportunity to a woman to overturn his empire. This was Julia Mœsa, sister to Caracalla's mother, who had two daughters, Sohemis and Julia Mammæa. The latter was mother of Alexander Severus, the former of Bassianus, who being priest of the sun, called by the Syrians Elagabel, Emesa, in Phœnicia, was surnamed Heliogabalus. Mœsa, being rich and liberal, prevailed for money with the army in Syria to proclaim him emperor; and Macrinus, quitting Antioch, was defeated and slain in Bithynia in 219, after he had reigned a year and two months, wanting three days. Heliogabalus, for his unnatural lusts, enormous prodigality and gluttony, and mad pride and vanity, was one of the most filthy monsters and detestable tyrants that Rome ever produced. He reigned only three years, nine months, and four days, being assassinated on the 11th of March 222 by the soldiers, together with his mother and favourites. His cousin-german and successor, Alexander, surnamed Severus, was for his clemency, modesty, sweetness, and prudence one of the best of princes. He discharged the officers of his predecessor, reduced the soldiers to their duty, and kept them in awe by regular pay. He had in his private chapel the images of Christ, Abraham, Apollonius of Tyana, and Orpheus, and learned of his mother, Mammæa, to have a great esteem for the Christians. It reflects great honour on our pope that this wise emperor used always to admire with what caution and solicitude the choice was made of persons that were promoted to the priesthood among

the Christians, whose example he often proposed to his officers and to the people, to be imitated in the election of civil magistrates.<sup>1</sup> It was in his peaceable reign that the Christians first began to build churches, which were demolished in the succeeding persecution. Lampridius, this emperor's historian, tells us that a certain idolater, putting in a claim to an oratory of the Christians which he wanted to make an eating-house of, the emperor adjudged the house to the Bishop of Rome, saying it were better it should serve in any kind to the divine worship than to gluttony, in being made a cook's shop.

To the debaucheries of Heliogabalus St Callistus opposed fasting and tears, and he every way promoted exceedingly true religion and virtue. His apostolic labours were recompensed with the crown of martyrdom on the 12th of October 222. His feast is marked on this day in the ancient Martyrology of Lucca. The Liberian Calendar places him in the list of martyrs, and testifies that he was buried on the 14th of this month in the cemetery of Calepodius, on the Aurelian Way, three miles from Rome. The pontificals ascribe to him a decree appointing the four fasts called Ember-days; which is confirmed by ancient Sacramentaries, and other monuments quoted by Moretti.<sup>2</sup> He also decreed that ordinations should be held in each of the Ember-weeks. He founded the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary beyond the Tiber. In the Calendar published by Fronto le Duc he is styled a confessor, but we find other martyrs sometimes called confessors. If St Callistus was thrown into a pit, as his acts relate, it seems probable that he was put to death in some popular tumult. Dion<sup>3</sup> mentions several such commotions under this prince, in one of which the prætorian guards murdered Ulpian, their own prefect. Pope Paul I and his successors, seeing the cemeteries without walls, and neglected after the devastations of the barbarians, withdrew from thence the bodies of the most illustrious martyrs, and had them carried to the principal churches of the city.<sup>4</sup> Those of SS. Callistus and Calepodius were translated to the Church of St Mary beyond the Tiber. Count Everard, lord of Cisoin or Chisoing, four leagues from Tournay, obtained of Leo IV, about the year 854, the body of St Callistus, pope and martyr, which he placed in the abbey of Canon Regulars which he had founded at Cisoin fourteen years before; the church of which place was on this account dedicated in honour of St Callistus. These circumstances are mentioned by Fulco, Archbishop of Rheims, in a letter which he wrote to Pope Formosus in 890.<sup>5</sup> The relics were removed soon after to Rheims for fear of the Normans, and never restored to the abbey of Cisoin. They remain

<sup>1</sup> Lamprid. in Alex.

<sup>2</sup> Moretti de St Callisto, Disq. I, p. 67, and Claudius Sommierus, t. i.; Hist. Dogmaticæ St Sedis, lib. ii. p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> Dio, 80, &c.

<sup>4</sup> See Baron. ad ann. 761, Diplom. Pauli I et Greg. IV, Anastas. Bibl. &c.

<sup>5</sup> Flodoard, Hist. Rhem. lib. iv. c. 1, 6.

behind the altar of our Lady at Rheims. Some of the relics, however, of this pope are kept with those of St Calepodius, martyr, in the Church of St Mary Trastevere at Rome.<sup>1</sup> A portion was formerly possessed at Glastonbury.<sup>2</sup>

Among the sacred edifices which upon the first transient glimpse of favour, or at least tranquillity, that the church enjoyed at Rome, this holy pope erected, the most celebrated was the cemetery which he enlarged and adorned on the Appian Road, the entrance of which is at St Sebastian's, a monastery founded by Nicholas I, now inhabited by reformed Cistercian monks. In it the bodies of SS. Peter and Paul lay for some time, according to Anastasius, who says that the devout Lady Lucina buried St Cornelius in her own farm near this place; whence it for some time took her name, though she is not to be confounded with Lucina who buried St Paul's body on the Ostian Way and built a famous cemetery on the Aurelian Way. Among many thousand martyrs deposited in this place were St Sebastian, whom the Lady Lucina interred, St Cecily, and several whose tombs Pope Damasus adorned with verses.

In the assured faith of the resurrection of the flesh, the saints, in all ages down from Adam, were careful to treat their dead with religious respect, and to give them a modest and decent burial. The commendations which our Lord bestowed on the woman who poured precious ointments upon him a little before his death, and the devotion of those pious persons who took so much care of our Lord's funeral, recommended this office of charity; and the practice of the primitive Christians in this respect was most remarkable. Their care of their dead consisted not in any extravagant pomp, in which the pagans far outdid them,<sup>3</sup> but in a modest religious gravity and respect which was most pathetically expressive of their firm hope of a future resurrection, in which they regarded the mortal remains of their dead as precious in the eyes of God, who watches over them, regarding them as the apple of his eye, to be raised one day in the brightest glory, and made shining lustres in the heavenly Jerusalem.

*The following feasts are celebrated on October 14 :*

ST BURCEARD, first Bishop of Wurtzburg, invited from England by St Boniface to work in his missionary field of Germany; the whole country was converted to Christ: ST CALLISTUS or CALIXTUS, the Pope who succeeded St Zepherin; he governed the Church in a time of great difficulty: ST DOMINIC, surnamed LORICATUS, who, being ordained a priest, could never be induced to exercise the sacred functions, having discovered that his parents had made a simoniacal stipulation with the bishop; he devoted himself to a life of rigid penance, and died on this date in 1060: and ST DONATIAN, Bishop of Rheims and patron of Bruges.

<sup>1</sup> See this evidently demonstrated from the decretal of Callistus II, in 1123, to Peter, cardinal of the title of St Mary Trastevere. Also from Innocent II and III, &c., and the archives of that church in Moretti, t. i. p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Monast. Anglic. t. i. p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Julian Aug. Ep. 49, ad Arsacium